


*Memories
of
Sixty Years*

HENRY SANDERSON FURNISS
(LORD SANDERSON)

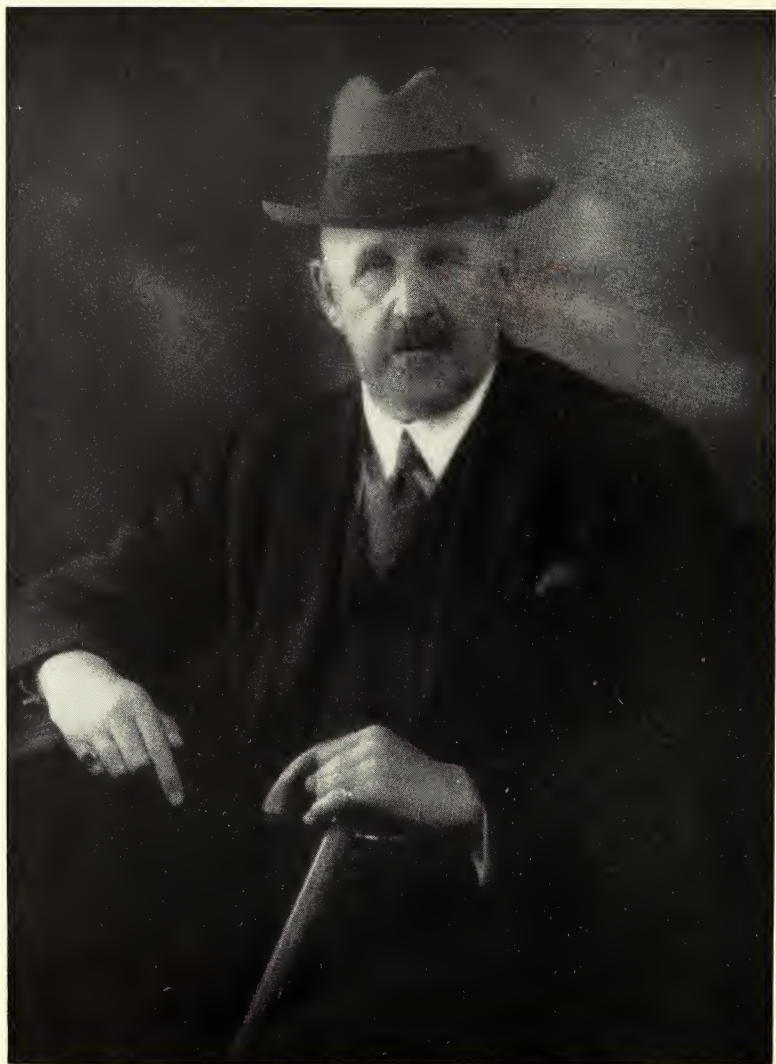


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MEMORIES OF SIXTY YEARS



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LORD SANDERSON
1930

MEMORIES OF SIXTY YEARS

BY
HENRY SANDERSON FURNISS
(LORD SANDERSON)

WITH FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS



D APPLETON AND COMPANY
NEW YORK MCMXXXI

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TO
MY COUSIN
WILLIAM SAMUEL JOHNSON
THIS BOOK IS
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

PREFATORY NOTE

IT has been suggested to me that some account of my life might be of interest to other blind men and women, that it might be a help, and possibly a warning, to the parents of blind children, and that, owing to the somewhat exceptional opportunities I have had of looking at the social, political, and economic problems of my time from two very different angles, it might even possess a still wider interest. One very candid friend, however, to whom I confided the idea of writing these memoirs said: 'It seems a very conceited thing to do. Who on earth would want to read *your* life?' Other friends—I hope equally candid—warmly encouraged me to make the attempt. Which of these two opinions is correct I do not know, and I must leave the decision in the hands of my readers.

SANDERSON

December 1930

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MEMORIES OF SIXTY YEARS

I

PARENTAGE

MY family all came from the north of England—the Sandersons from South Yorkshire, the Furnisses from North Derbyshire. The Sandersons came from the same family as Robert Sanderson, Bishop of Lincoln 1660–3, the Dr. Sanderson of Walton's *Lives*. By the middle of the eighteenth century my branch of the family, which settled in Sheffield, had either sunk or risen in the social scale (according to the point of view taken), for my great-great-grandfather was not a bishop, but a tailor. He had three sons, the eldest of whom, Thomas Sanderson, one of my great-grandfathers, went into partnership with a steel manufacturer called Naylor. On Naylor going out of the firm, Sanderson took in his two brothers, and formed the firm of Sanderson Brothers.

Thomas Sanderson seems to have been rather a remarkable man, and somewhat ahead of his time in the steel industry. He was one of the first to adopt in Sheffield the crucible steel process, and this gave him a pull over his competitors. To judge from the books, pieces of furniture, glass, and china which have come down to me, he must have been a man of considerable taste and of fairly wide interests. He must also have been a jovial old fellow, if the following story, for which my father used to vouch, is true. At a dinner given to a party of his men friends, when the wine had gone round pretty freely, one of the guests broke a glass, and began to apologize. 'Don't apologize,' said Sanderson. 'Damn it all, let's break the lot!' banging his glass on the table—an example immediately followed by the whole party. I cannot help hoping that the

glass in question was not of the same rare quality as the few specimens of Waterford which I have inherited from my great-grandfather.

One of his daughters, Ann Sanderson, married my paternal grandfather Henry Furniss. He became a partner in the firm, ultimately turned into a joint-stock company known as Sanderson Brothers & Newbould. My father was for a great part of his life a director, and for some years chairman, of the firm, and my younger brother is at the present time a director.

John Sanderson, younger brother of my great-grandfather Thomas, had a son Edward Fisher Sanderson, who as a very young man went out to New York as agent to the firm in the United States. He married a Miss Julia Carow, who came from a French Huguenot family whose name was originally spelt more correctly and more attractively as 'Quereau'. The Quereaus had come over to America immediately after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and were some of the first settlers at New Rochelle, now almost a suburb of New York. As far as I know, there is now only one representative of the family in the direct line who actually bears the name Carow—my mother's first cousin, Miss Emily Carow, sister of Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, President Roosevelt's widow.

My mother, Mary Sanderson, was a daughter of Edward Fisher Sanderson and Julia Carow, and my father was the only son of Henry Furniss and Ann Sanderson (the daughter of Thomas Sanderson, founder of Sanderson Brothers). My father and mother were thus second cousins, my paternal grandmother Ann Sanderson and my maternal grandfather Edward Fisher Sanderson being first cousins, and I am in consequence a good deal more Sanderson than Furniss.

My grandfather Edward Fisher Sanderson became a naturalized American, and spent nearly all his life in New York, with the exception of his last few years, when he came over to England and settled in a house near Sheffield which he had inherited from his uncle, James Sanderson. He took a keen interest in science, and was a member of most of the scientific bodies in New York, and afterwards in Sheffield.

Of the Furnisses I know little. They came from Foolow

in Derbyshire, a very small village close to Eyam, famous for its connexion with the Great Plague of London. The Furnisses seem to have been farmers for some generations before the time of my grandfather Henry Furniss. They came of Puritan stock, and seem to have been moderately prosperous, as both Eyam and Foolow churchyards contain tombstones bearing the name Furniss, coupled in many cases with Puritan Christian names. My great-grandfather Matthew Furniss seems to have grown tired of life in the country, and he migrated to Sheffield towards the end of the eighteenth century, where he built up a silver-plating business.

My grandfather Henry Furniss, who abandoned silver-plating for a partnership in Sanderson Brothers, was a good-natured, kindly man who was much beloved by the little circle amongst whom he lived. But he must have been a somewhat prosaic person with very limited interests and very limited imagination. He kept a diary for years, in which he rarely recorded anything beyond what he had had for dinner and the date of the wine he had got up! His main interest lay in Sanderson Brothers and the manufacture of steel, and in his duties as churchwarden. He lived about four miles from Sheffield at a place called Whirlow, then well in the country. He rode down to Sheffield every morning, and very often again in the evening about six o'clock, after dinner. He and my grandmother made one expedition abroad, visiting Belgium and going down the Rhine, but apart from this they never went more than a few miles from Sheffield all their lives, with the exception of occasional visits to London and Scarborough.

My father, Thomas Sanderson Furniss, who was born in 1833, went to Harrow and Trinity College, Cambridge. He was high up in the sixth form when he left Harrow, and was looked upon as a very promising mathematician. He went up to Cambridge in 1853, where he took things easily as regards his studies, and graduated with only a senior optime in 1857. In the following year he was called to the Bar, and in the same year he was married in New York. He and my mother settled in London, where their four children were born—May in 1860, myself in 1868, Julia in 1870, and Tom in 1872. My father worked for some years at the Bar in a rather desultory

way, almost entirely at conveyancing work in chambers, very rarely appearing in court. About 1875 he gave up his practice altogether, and became very active in various forms of voluntary work. He was one of the early pioneers of the Charity Organisation Society, working in close touch with C. S. Loch, afterwards Sir Charles Loch, the first general secretary of the society. My father was a member of both the Paddington and Southwark C.O.S. committees, and was for some years honorary secretary of the Southwark Committee. He was on the governing body of two hospitals and of a society for the blind, and also worked for the Society for the Relief of Distress. He was a member of the Paddington Board of Guardians and a churchwarden, and he went once a month, and sometimes more often, to the board meetings of Sanderson Brothers & Newbould in Sheffield.

In 1883 he bought a country house with about eight acres of land at Higham, a village in Suffolk eight miles from Colchester, which for the next few years we used as our summer home. But in 1887 my father decided to live there altogether, partly owing to my mother having broken down in health, and partly owing to his increasing fondness for country life. He enlarged the house and bought a good deal more land, gradually dropping his London work, and settling down to the life of a country gentleman. He became a magistrate and a member of the local Board of Guardians, busying himself also with Church matters and as a school manager. A strong Conservative, he was an active member of the local Conservative Association, and was a leading spirit in forming a very vigorous branch of the Primrose League, in which he held high office. To the work of the League he devoted a great deal of time and energy. He did a good deal of work for the Conservative Party in the Woodbridge Division of Suffolk, but mainly on the organizing and administrative side. He sometimes took the chair at meetings, but much disliked speaking in public, and was not naturally a good speaker.

My father was in many respects a typical Victorian of the middle classes. He had few intellectual interests, absolutely no ear for music, and little appreciation of art of any kind, though he rarely missed a yearly visit to the Royal Academy

and occasionally bought engravings. He read little to himself, but did a good deal of reading aloud to us children, chiefly Dickens, whose books he very much enjoyed. He liked *Vanity Fair*, but on the whole did not think much of Thackeray as compared with Dickens. He thought Jane Austen dull and George Eliot rather improper. He was not even particularly enthusiastic about Scott. Of later Victorian writers, such as Meredith and Hardy, he knew nothing. He was a Low Churchman, but not bigoted. He attached little importance to dogma, and took no interest in the religious discussions of his time. His was a simple piety, and he valued the Church as an instrument for good and as a national institution. He read family prayers both morning and evening, went regularly to church twice every Sunday, and to Communion on 'Communion Sundays', the first Sunday in the month. Early services were almost unknown in the Low Church until my father was becoming an old man, and they never much appealed to him.

Sport and many forms of outdoor exercise attracted my father all his life. He never hunted, but from a boy he had ridden, and until he was about fifty riding was his favourite exercise. He gave it up after his nerve had become somewhat shaken by his horse falling with him once or twice. He was a good shot, and shot almost every year until he was well over seventy. Though never a cricketer himself, he took a keen interest in cricket, and enjoyed watching matches at the Oval and Lord's. He was a very fair lawn tennis player, and fond of all sorts of card games.

My father was an only son, and throughout his life he had sufficient money to enable him to live quite comfortably without the necessity of earning. He inherited all his father's and mother's property, and also came into a good deal of money from the Sanderson side of the family. On strictly Victorian principles he saved steadily all his life, and I think never in any year spent the whole of his income. His security as regards money was perhaps in some ways a misfortune for him, for he had powers which could have brought him success in more than one direction. He had great administrative and organizing gifts, but all his life never found the opportunity of applying them on a large enough scale. When he settled down

at Higham at the age of fifty-four he was still a vigorous and active man. He had few indoor occupations, he had given up riding, and there were not many opportunities for sport in that neighbourhood. The habit he had of worrying and spending a great deal of time over little things grew on him, while much of his organizing ability was expended in organizing his family when it could have been much more usefully devoted to wider objects. He always loved to plan and arrange everything for us, even when we were quite grown up, and this was his weak point as a father. He liked to settle everything for us—what we should do from day to day, where we should go, what friends we should see, and in fact almost every detail of our lives. This was often irritating, and had the effect—in my case at any rate—of making me hesitate about suggesting any line of action for fear of the fuss, agitation, and discussion which would be sure to arise. Here is an example of his love of settling the smallest details. When I was about seventeen I was going with a friend to visit a place where we had both formerly lived with a private tutor. We were to drive over and spend one night at the village inn and see our friends in the place the next day. Every detail had of course to be discussed with my father—the time we should start, when we should get back, when we had better see our friends, and almost what we had better order for dinner. But just as we were starting, my father came to me and said : ‘ I have been rather worried about what you are going to do all the evening after dinner, but I suppose you can sit somewhere and smoke your pipes ! ’ His love of doing things for us to this extent certainly had a bad effect on me. It made me rely too much on the opinion of other people, it made me doubtful of my own powers, and shook my self-confidence. But though it was all done with the best and kindest intentions, and though my father’s judgments were generally wise and often wiser than mine might have been, I think on the whole it is better to arrange things badly for oneself than to have them arranged well by some one else.

During the last twenty-five years of his life my father did much good work at Higham, though in a rather restricted sphere. He was much beloved by the villagers, amongst whom

he lived on the most friendly and intimate terms, and by a large circle of friends and neighbours. Feudalism in the country villages has its bad side, but it also has its good points, and I always think that my father's life at Higham brought out its good points in a way that is very rarely seen.

He was a little man, not above five feet six inches in height, with very bright blue eyes and pink cheeks. In later life he wore a magnificent silky white beard, cut square, which made him an almost exact replica of the orthodox Father Christmas—a name by which, to his great amusement, he became known to his young friends. He had a remarkable personality which made him appear a much bigger man physically than he really was, and he was generally the centre of attraction in any company in which he found himself.

My father was a man of very deep affections, though at times a little austere, and in many ways reserved. Though I was very fond of him, a sort of shyness always prevented me from showing him the affection which I felt and for which I believe he longed. I suppose that parents are always fonder of their children than their children are of them; and if this is not universally the case, it seems always easier for the parent than for the child to be demonstrative. As a young man I was probably as intimate with my father as is the case with most sons, and I had a great respect for his judgment, knowledge of the world, and shrewd common sense. But I never once discussed with him any fundamental questions—such, for example, as sex or religion, and in fact never even thought of doing so. During the last few years of his life, however, we did, largely through the influence of my wife, to whom he was devoted, come much closer together, and I believe he knew then how really fond I was of him. At any rate I hope he did.

My mother was brought up in New York, where she lived until her marriage, with the exception of two years when the whole family came over to England to take possession of the property near Sheffield which had been left to my grandfather by his uncle, James Sanderson. She then first met and became engaged to my father. This visit included one of the continental tours which Americans at that date were in the habit of taking. My mother and her four sisters seem to have had

a pretty good time, and though they were brought up with the utmost strictness, my mother, who was very pretty, seems to have enjoyed to the full all the ordinary frivolities of the life of a young girl. A diary kept in Paris in 1855 contains a whole page of description of a new bonnet which, we are told, 'suited me amazingly'.

For some years after her marriage I think she must have been very lonely in London away from her family and her American friends. My father had few friends in London, and my mother had little occupation beyond attending to household duties; she found long visits to my grandfather's home near Sheffield rather trying. The kind of life led by the Sheffield people of those days was provincial in the extreme, and my mother was there thrown into a society very different from that she had known in New York. She never went back to America, though I think she would have much enjoyed doing so. She and my father did not like the idea of leaving us children, and by the time we had grown up she had almost completely lost touch with most of her American friends.

Her mother, Mrs. Edward Fisher Sanderson, seems to have moulded her own outlook upon life on the sternest Puritan principles. Whether these were imbibed from her Huguenot ancestry or from her Scottish mother I do not know, but she apparently held that it was wrong, besides being unladylike, to show the slightest signs of emotion either of pleasure or pain. Pleasure was to be taken as it came, without any enthusiasm, and pain was to be silently endured. These principles she sedulously inculcated amongst her children, with very unfortunate results in my mother's case at any rate, and I believe that I myself have always suffered in some respects from the effects of my grandmother's Puritanism.

Though my mother was, I am sure, deeply affectionate, there was always a sort of shyness about her which seemed to prevent her showing her feelings. She gave me the idea of always trying to hold herself in. She was very gentle and sweet-tempered, and very much beloved by those who knew her well, though I think it was not easy to know her well. She was a good deal with us children, but I never remember her really romping with us. She used to read aloud to me when I was

a little boy, but was not herself much interested in literature. I was only at home in the holidays after the age of thirteen ; when I was nineteen she became seriously ill, and for the remaining twelve years of her life she was more or less an invalid and not able to take much interest in my pursuits.

Possibly the Spartan views of my grandmother which came down to us may have been good for us in some ways. We were never allowed to worry about our health ; and nerves, with which so many young people seem to be afflicted nowadays, were unknown in our family. But we went too far in the other direction, and oftener suffered quite unnecessarily when simple and ordinary precautions might have been taken. ' You must learn to bear it,' we were constantly told, when, with the aid of a doctor or dentist, there would have been nothing to bear.

I have thought it worth while to write this much about my family history, and particularly about my parents, as it throws some light on my own life and especially upon the way in which I was brought up.

II

CHILDHOOD AND BOYHOOD

THE diary of my grandfather Henry Furniss for October 1st, 1868 contains the following extract : ' We had a shoulder of mutton for dinner and I got up a bottle of the '47 port.' Then, in the margin, ' My daughter-in-law Mary Furniss gave birth to a son.' I was the son referred to. My elder sister May had been born eight years earlier, almost blind, but as far as I know no serious steps were taken immediately after my birth to discover whether my eyes were all right or not. The nurse is reported to have said that there was nothing wrong with them, and this view was confirmed by the leading London oculist of the day, to whom I was taken when I was about six months old. However, both the nurse and the oculist were mistaken, for I have been practically blind all my life : not totally blind, for I can even now distinguish between light and darkness, and up to the age of forty-five, when I began to become noticeably worse, I could see a great deal more than that. I am inclined to think that I became almost imperceptibly worse for many years before that time. Though it is impossible to be certain about it, my blindness, as well as May's, was probably due to infantile ophthalmia, which must have attacked me a few days after birth, and had my birth been postponed for a few years I could almost certainly have been easily cured. My younger sister and brother have always had exceptionally good sight.

I have never been able to read, except when I was a boy, and then only in a type so large that hardly anything was printed in it except parts of the Bible. But although I could not see to read, as a boy and young man I could see a good deal. I could get about fairly well by myself, and could form a definite idea of objects at a considerable distance. Though it may seem odd to say so, while I was practically blind I had an extraordinarily good eye. I could throw a stone or a ball



HENRY SANDERSON FURNISS WITH HIS FATHER

with remarkable accuracy, even though I could not see the object aimed at, as long as I knew the exact line of direction. I was quite a good croquet player, and could make the most wonderful shots as long as some one stood near the ball or hoop at which I was aiming, so as to give me the line. I had a strong underhand service at tennis which hardly any one could take, and I nearly always brought off my first service. I was quite good at bowls as long as some one stood near the jack. As a boy I was an adept with peg-top and whip-top. I could bowl a hoop as well as other boys, and up to the age of about fifteen I even played cricket on and off. My father taught us to play cricket, and we began by playing with a hard white ball, as I could see that better than the ordinary red cricket ball. But this was not good enough for me, and I soon insisted on playing with a proper ball. I was a fair over-arm bowler as long as I could see the batsman, at whom I really bowled, sometimes quite successfully as regards his wicket. As a bat I was less successful, but now and then I managed to make a hit, judging largely by sound as to whereabouts the ball had pitched. In the field of course I was quite useless. Although I could see nothing out of the centre of my eyes, I had rather exceptional vision, apparently, out of the corners, and oculists I have consulted have called in other oculists, who were astonished at the amount I could see in this way.

I am sure my blindness was a terrible blow to my father, and he seems to have made up his mind almost from the first to disregard it and to treat it as non-existent. He never would through all his life recognize that I was blind, and always spoke of me as 'rather short-sighted'. My elder sister, who was worse than I was, was treated differently, and more like a blind person. I think the idea was that it did not matter quite so much in the case of a girl, as education and games were not thought to be so important. But our blindness was never mentioned in the family or amongst friends. It was treated as a sort of mystery, and I used to hear from time to time hushed whispers about it which often perplexed me, for it was quite a long time—not until I was almost grown up—that I myself really recognized that I was a blind man. I remember being very much upset and actually bursting into

tears when the head mistress of a private school I went to rebuked me for fighting with another boy, adding: 'It is not fair for you to fight because, with your affliction, other boys cannot hit you back.' Later I remember a fellow-pupil at a private tutor's telling me he had had a letter from his brother asking how 'the little blind boy' was getting on, and being quite angry with my friend for having described me in this way.

My father's attitude on the subject was often quite embarrassing, for sometimes when a friend would offer an arm to help me over a difficult piece of road or down a flight of stairs he would say: 'No, no; he's all right; he can see quite well'—making things extremely difficult for me and awkward for the friend. My father was determined that I should be brought up as other boys are brought up and do the things they did.

Whether my mother agreed with him or not I do not know, but she always accepted his point of view. He even asked the head mistress of my private school to let me play association football with the other boys, though this was very wisely refused. But I did not see why I could not play, and I shall never forget the hours I spent with bitterness in my heart as a solitary figure walking up and down a path by the side of the football field while the other boys played. When I went to a private tutor in the country the other pupils very naturally decided that I could not play fives, and I well remember wandering about the garden after this decision, muttering to myself: 'I am not such a fool as they think me. I am not such a fool as they think me.'

This idea of my father's of course had its good points. It made me extraordinarily enterprising, and even reckless. At one time I actually had thoughts of trying to ride a high bicycle, and when I was about fifteen I remember riding over the Berkshire Downs with two other boys, without a leading rein, on a horse hired in the village which had never before been used as a saddle horse. This enterprise was undertaken without the knowledge of our tutor, and was promptly put a stop to, in my case at any rate. As far as I knew there was nothing to prevent my doing the things other boys did; and if this were the case, why should I not be equally good at them?

And my efforts to keep up with other boys certainly gave me plenty of fresh air and hard exercise.

On the other hand, there was a constant disappointment from failure. Of course in practically all games I was not so good as other boys, and the feeling gradually grew upon me that by insisting on taking part in games I was often spoiling the game, as well as the pleasure of other players. As a child I must have given my younger sister and brother a great deal of trouble, and must have interfered a good deal with their games by having constantly to ask them to find my ball or to pick up my top.

From the age of about fifteen to twenty, in my holidays, my father used actually to take me to tennis-parties and croquet-parties. Although I could always win my service game at tennis, I hardly ever succeeded in taking a ball throughout a set, and unless my partner was extraordinarily good or our opponents exceptionally bad they always won. With croquet it was rather different, but the game was somewhat interfered with by some one having to stand near the ball or hoop at which I was to aim. After a time I began to realize that these proceedings made me look very foolish, my father ridiculous, spoiled games, and made every one concerned very uncomfortable. So when I was about twenty I refused to play any more croquet or lawn tennis.

There are certain forms of sport which a blind man can enjoy almost as well as anybody else—riding and rowing, for example. When I was seven years old I learned to ride, and I rode constantly with my father in the country in my holidays, and in the Row in London, or sometimes in the country just outside London. We always of course had a leading rein, and I had a fiery little pony who nearly pulled my arms off as well as my father's. We came to grief sometimes. I remember my father's horse shying once ; the leading rein caught in my leg, dragging me off my pony, with the result that both my father and myself rolled into the Harrow Road. We both mounted again and rode home, though my father's knee was rather badly injured and my head was cut. That was in accordance with my father's creed. ' We mustn't give in ; we're not going to be beaten by that sort of thing,'

he said. When my father gave up riding I gave it up too, and I have rarely ridden since I was about sixteen. I wish now very much that I had gone on with this form of exercise.

Higham is situated on the banks of the River Stour, and here I learned to row. For some years every summer I spent many a happy hour learning to swim and sculling up and down the river or paddling a Canadian canoe. When I went up to Oxford, I went down to the river to be coached in my first term, but I soon found that I was not good enough or strong enough for 'professional' rowing. However, I took to double sculling, and this became one of my favourite forms of exercise while I was at Oxford and until many years later, when I strained my heart and had to abandon it.

When I was with a private tutor in the country, one of my fellow-pupils was given a fearsome machine called a 'sociable tricycle'. It had four wheels—a steering-wheel in front and a little wheel behind to prevent tipping over backwards, and we sat side by side. It took up a good deal of room on the road, as it was nearly as broad as a carriage. It was almost impossible to ride it up the slightest hill, and it was fairly heavy to push. But it would go along pretty well on the flat, and we made it go! Downhill it got up a tremendous speed, and it was quite impossible to stop it. We charged down hills, with our feet on the foot-rests, I blowing a bugle, and somehow or other we never had an accident, the traffic on the country roads in those days being almost non-existent as compared with the present time. We sometimes went thirty or forty miles a day on this machine, and it certainly gave us plenty of exercise. Later on, for four or five years I rode a tandem bicycle with a friend or with my brother, and this I found a much more satisfactory means of locomotion. At my tutor's I introduced the practice of walking on stilts, at which I became very expert. I could do all sorts of tricks on them—throwing one stilt over my shoulder and hopping on the other, for example. We used to walk all over the village on stilts, and sometimes through the village pond, into which I once fell, but with no harm to myself beyond a very dirty wetting.

Until recent years I have always been a great walker. I was inured to long walks by my father in quite early days. Until I

was ten years old we always spent two or three months in the summer at Whirlow House, near Sheffield, with my grandmother, Mrs. Henry Furniss, and when September came my father and my uncle Tom Sanderson (my mother's only brother) went over to Stoney Middleton to shoot once a week or so, my father having some rough shooting there. They also went down from London two or three times in the course of the winter for a few days' shooting, stopping at the village inn. Before I was nine years old my father began the practice of taking me with him on these expeditions. I think even then he was always regretting that I should not be able in the future to join him in his favourite sport, but I walked with the guns. We started at eight o'clock in the morning in the shooting wagon, filled with dogs, guns, and cartridge bags, and drove eight miles over the Derbyshire moors to Stoney Middleton, where about nine-thirty we set off, accompanied by two gamekeepers. I always walked close behind my father, slightly to his left, and with the exception of an interval for luncheon we walked all day. It was a very long and tiring day for me, but I thoroughly enjoyed it. Much of the walking was very rough, often along steep hill-sides, and backwards and forwards up and down turnip fields. The fields were small and always enclosed by stone walls which involved a lot of climbing. My father sometimes allowed one of the keepers to give me an arm over the rough places, and when I was very small I was lifted over the highest of the walls. But as a rule I walked by myself. We had a most elaborate hot luncheon brought out to us from the inn, and this I enjoyed very much, especially the shandygaff which even then I was allowed to consume.

I also enormously enjoyed the society of the two keepers—old Cocker and his son Tom, two typical Derbyshire countrymen. I used to regale my family when I got home by talking in their broad Derbyshire dialect, but had to be checked with regard to some of my quotations from their remarks, such as 'Coom in, ye daam'd bitch, can't ye!' I remember being absolutely delighted on one occasion. My father had shot a rabbit on one side of Middleton Dale, and Tom, who had been sent to pick it up, discovered a village boy sneaking off with it. The boy was pursued and soon collared, when old Cocker's

voice was heard bellowing from the opposite side of the Dale : ' Poonch 'is arse, maan, poonch 'is arse ! ' This anecdote I was not allowed to repeat at home ! Old Cocker always had about his person a small bottle of rum, from which he refreshed me with a ' soop ', as he called it, from time to time. When my father remonstrated on one occasion, he replied : ' There was nobbut threepennorth o' room to start wi', and it's been wattered three times ! '

I went out shooting with my father in this way a few times almost every year, from the age of nine until I was eighteen, and on the whole I enjoyed it, even in the later years. The country was extraordinarily beautiful and the air wonderful, and I loved the times we spent at the old village inn, with the ham and eggs and wonderful ducks and chickens on which we fared there. But looking back I am sure these long, rough walks were far too much for a little child who had great difficulty in seeing his way, and I often came home quite exhausted, though nothing would have induced me to admit this.

We thoroughly enjoyed those summers at Whirlow House. There was a beautiful garden with a lake, and we were allowed to run wild, which of course meant a great deal to London children. My grandfather had died when I was four years old, but my grandmother, who lived until I was nine, I remember very well, and I was rather a favourite of hers. She sometimes showed her partiality in somewhat indiscreet ways. She had been ordered a glass of hot whisky and water after dinner—an unusual prescription in those days, when whisky was very little drunk south of the Tweed. I came down to dessert, and was always—to the horror of my mother—given a sip from my grandmother's glass ! But no remonstrance on the part of my mother had the slightest effect on my grandmother. She was mistress, or it might be truer to say a despotic sovereign, in her own house. There she reigned supreme, superintending every detail of household economy, taking immense pride in her beautiful glass, plate, and china, and learned (as were the women of her day) in cooking and recipes. She was known on important occasions to descend herself to the kitchen and demonstrate to her cook the way in which cooking should be

done. We have to-day an elaborate leather-bound book with a lock and key containing recipes written out in a fine copper-plate hand—recipes so reckless in the use of expensive and almost forgotten luxuries that one marvels at the digestion which was able to cope with such dishes.

But she was much more than a mere housewife, being keenly alive to other interests. A story is told of her that on one occasion when she and my grandfather gave a dinner-party and when the men joined the ladies in the drawing-room (probably a considerable time after the ladies had left the dining-room, as was the custom in those days), my grandmother was not with her guests. My grandfather set out to look for her, and ultimately found her in her bedroom finishing *Jane Eyre*, absolutely absorbed in the book and totally oblivious of the ladies in the drawing-room. She had made some excuse to slip up to her room, glanced at the book while she was there, and could not leave it!

In addition to Cocker and Tom, the old Whirlow coachman was a great friend of my childhood's days. We used to go for enormous drives in a wagonette, I generally on the box with Carr, from whom I gathered all sorts of information about horses. One feature of these drives was tea in a Derbyshire inn, always consisting of large plates of ham and eggs. On one occasion I remember my father asking Carr whether he had had a good tea, to which the old man replied that he had done 'middlin' well'. He said they had brought him ten eggs at the beginning, and, these being finished, had asked him if he would have any more. 'I never did eat a score,' he said, 'so you can bring me nine more!' I admired him tremendously, and he was fond of me. When he died he left me his walking-stick.

When I was about ten I began to go once a week to a gymnasium, and this went on for the next two years. I think the exercises did me good, and I could do almost any of the gymnastics quite as well as the other boys—in fact, better than most. One or two things I was not allowed to do, which made me rather unhappy because I really did not quite understand why. I well remember my instructor standing under the skylight as I was swarming up the long rope, and shouting

in a terrified voice : ' No higher, Master Furniss, no higher ! '—an injunction which I always disregarded. We had a trapeze fixed up on the landing outside our nursery, and on this I soon became able to do almost anything. I seem to have been a remarkably active boy, and if I could only have seen there is probably no reason why I should not have made quite a good athlete.

My father was very fond of all kinds of indoor games ; he taught me many of them, and spent much time playing cribbage or bezique with me. I also played whist in a family four. With difficulty I could see the pips on the cards in my own hand, but of course had to be told what was played. I also played draughts and backgammon a good deal with my father, and he tried to teach me chess. But this was not a success. I have tried to learn the game several times since, but have never made any progress, so I evidently do not possess a chess mind. I wish very much that I did, as chess is of course a game at which the blind often excel. We had a bagatelle board when we were quite young children, and I managed to play quite well, hitting the red ball of course entirely through a sense of direction. Billiards I never attempted. Cards I gave up later on, as I did not like the trouble that my play gave to other people and the slowness involved. The only card game I now play is picquet—much the best card game for two, I think. I play with Braille cards, and only with my wife or a friend who does not mind going slowly.

I have always been extremely fond of music, and when quite a little boy my sister May's governess began to teach me the piano, which, however, I hated. She taught me nothing but scales, and after a short time I absolutely refused to go on. But while I was learning the piano, and for some time before that, I was teaching myself to play every kind of toy instrument I could get hold of. I could learn quickly by ear, and could reproduce perfectly on the tin whistle and mouth-organ any tune I heard on the barrel-organs or by the German bands which visited our neighbourhood. Later I tried to teach myself the flute. In fact, I would play on any instrument I could get hold of except the piano. There can be no worse way of beginning to teach children music than through the

medium of scales, and I believe that ridiculous method has now been abandoned. If I had been taught at the beginning to play simple little tunes I am sure I should have delighted in the piano.

I think I had rather a critical sense for music in quite early days, for I never could endure the family hymn-singing in which we indulged on Sunday evenings. None of my family were very good singers, and as my father, who had no ear, always joined in, the whole effect was rather painful. I often refused to sing at all myself, and this disagreeable attitude further upset the harmony of the proceedings.

The piano was given up as hopeless, but when I was eleven I was induced to learn the violin, and the violin has been a great pleasure to me and a great resource for a large part of my life. I had a fiery old German master, who was a fine player himself, and who taught me some good music. This I learned of course by ear. But he did not teach me much of the technique of playing; and it was not until years after that I learned certain points about bowing which are essential and which I ought to have been taught at the outset. I never studied under a first-rate teacher, though in later years I worked with some who were fairly good. But by that time it had become too late for me to acquire the technique I ought to have mastered earlier. My technique therefore was never good, and I could not play any very difficult or intricate music. Some of my teachers were just pianists who confined themselves to teaching me new music by ear, and as I was never taught anything about musical notation or the rules of time, I was left to pick up everything in this way. But I am told that I produced a good tone and played in a musicianly way. At any rate, people seemed to like to hear me play.

My father of course knew nothing about music, and my mother very little, though she liked listening to it, and in consequence I never realized what music really meant or even heard the name of a single famous composer until I was thirteen, when I was taken quite by chance to hear Handel's oratorio *Samson* at the Albert Hall. Some one who had been going with my mother failed at the last moment, and it was decided that I should go. Barnby was conducting, and Madame

Albani, Edward Lloyd, and Santley were three of the soloists. I was never so overwhelmed in my life. A new world seemed suddenly opened to me, and it is impossible to describe my sensations. They may be imagined, however, to some extent if it is remembered that I was naturally a very musical child who had never before heard anything better than a street band. About a month later I was taken to hear the *Messiah*, and had another great thrill. But I have never known again quite the same feelings of absolute amazement and delight as I experienced when I went to hear *Samson*, and the Minuet out of the overture still thrills me to the bone whenever I hear it.

It is quite clear that the blind can never excel in athletic pursuits, but it is equally certain that they can hold their own, and more than hold their own, with regard to the things of the mind, and I wish very much that in my case my parents had paid less attention to outdoor sports and more to intellectual pursuits, to interesting me in books, and to encouraging my taste for music in a more intelligent way than they did. They could easily have afforded to give me the best musical instruction, and I feel sure that with proper teaching I could have become quite a good musician and a very fair amateur violinist. At that time, however, music was still looked upon as an occupation for girls, and the majority of boys were not taught music at all. My father, while he never opposed my learning the violin, and in fact was pleased with my progress, always, I think, somewhat regretted it as an unfortunate concession to my 'short-sightedness'.

It would probably have been better had it been acknowledged from the first that I could never read or write, and I should certainly have been taught Braille as a child. When I was a boy there were of course not very many books done in Braille, but those I required could have been embossed for me. My sister May did take up Braille, but not until she was about thirty (when I introduced it to her), and she was given a typewriter in the early 'eighties. I never learned Braille until I was forty-four, when I taught myself, and I never had a typewriter until I was thirty-five. This was no doubt partly my own fault, but I had become accustomed to doing things in other ways, to having books read aloud to me, and to dictating

my letters or to writing them myself very illegibly and with great difficulty. My father's ideas about my only being short-sighted I think unconsciously influenced me, while he, I feel sure, did not encourage Braille or a typewriter on the ground that they would amount to a recognition of my blindness.

I never even knew of the existence of Braille until I went up to Oxford in 1889, and I then made an effort to learn it. But I could not afford the time to master it quickly enough to make use of it in my studies. I have since found it a great resource, but have kept it mainly for lighter reading. As I began so late, however, I am only a comparatively slow reader. I learned to type, as I have said, when I was thirty-five, but gave this up after a few years—I am afraid owing to laziness. I had by that time a very competent secretary who was a good short-hand writer, and I have always much preferred dictating to him.

My parents seem to have made no inquiries whatever about the bringing up of blind children, and they knew nothing as to what was going on amongst the blind generally, apart from the society for the blind of which my father was a governor; but this was mainly concerned with basket-making and employment of that kind. Had they themselves possessed a wider outlook they could have awakened in me quite early in life interests which I could have followed up afterwards with much greater ease than I was able to when I did meet with them and when my mind was less plastic.

As a boy, until I went away from home at the age of thirteen, I knew very little indeed about books, and had hardly even heard the names of the great writers on any subject. I read *The Pilgrim's Progress* at a very early age, and enjoyed that, and I was familiar with a great part of the Bible. I remember much enjoying *Robinson Crusoe*, which I read again in later years with pleasure, but I think my mother must have omitted most of the long moral and pious soliloquies, or I probably should not have liked the book so much! *Sandford and Merton* rather annoyed and bored me, but I loved Miss Edgeworth's *Moral Tales*. I did not care about fairy-stories, and remember thinking *Alice in Wonderland*, which was read to me when I was about nine, very silly. Poetry, I am sorry to say, has never appealed to me; it may be because—as I

believe—poetry cannot be fully appreciated unless it is read to oneself. Of course the rhythm and melody of poetry can be enjoyed if it is read aloud by a good reader, but I never cared for rhythm and melody alone, and I doubt whether the true sense of poetry, except of the simplest kinds, can be grasped unless it is read and re-read to oneself. I may of course be quite wrong about this, and it is very likely that my failure to appreciate poetry is due to something wanting in me. Books of adventure I think appealed to me most, and I was very much excited over Kingston's series beginning with *The Three Midshipmen* and ending with *The Three Admirals*; Marryat's *Masterman Ready* was always a favourite. *The Swiss Family Robinson* I liked, but everything went rather too well with them to please me. Much of this reading was all very well, but I feel now that I might have been put on to better stuff.

I am said to have been rather a precocious child, and am supposed to have begun to talk when I was nine months old. I have never been much of a talker since, so perhaps I overdid it then. My education proper I think began when I was about six with *The Child's Guide to Knowledge*—quite a useful book in its way, and from which I believe I absorbed a good deal. It is written in the form of questions and answers, and it begins with fundamental things, for as far as I remember the first question is: 'What is the world?' I remember also about this time learning by heart a list of the names of the kings of Israel, though why I do not quite know. However, I enjoyed learning the list, though it does not seem to have made a lasting impression on me, as I cannot remember much about it now.

My mother somehow or other managed to teach me my letters, and to read words of one syllable. She did it by means of a reading-book printed in very large type. I do not think I attempted writing before I went to school. When I was eight and my younger sister Julia six, we were sent to a kindergarten—an advanced proceeding in those days, for the kindergarten was in 1876 comparatively new in England. This one was carried on by two German ladies, a Mrs. Roth and her daughter. It was in Kensington Gardens Square, Bayswater, and we were for a time—I do not know why—taken from Porchester Square, where we lived, to and from the school side

by side in a bath-chair hired for the purpose ! Julia was sent rather young, largely with the idea of my having some one to look after me at school. She always looked after me a great deal when I was a boy. She learned to read fluently when she was a very small child, did a good deal of reading aloud to me, and was my constant playmate. Shortly after we went to school the family moved to a house in Kensington Gardens Square, and we were then able to set out on foot together.

One of the first things I remember about the kindergarten was seeing the bigger boys run up and down the forms. I, in accordance with my general principle of trying to do everything that other boys did, immediately tried my hand, with Julia's help ; but here I had to submit to failure.

Somehow or other I was taught to write, and I could do most of the things that are done at kindergartens as well as the other children, and I was rather a success as a singer, being often picked out for solos or duets on the days when parents came to visit the school.

When I was ten I went on to a boys' school, which was also in Kensington Gardens Square, only a few doors from the kindergarten. It was called the Doric College, and was kept by a Miss Bailey, but the principal teacher was a Miss Fullicks, from whom I learned a good deal during the three years I was at the school. I began French, got a really good grounding in Latin grammar, and made considerable progress in elementary arithmetic. I had my first introduction to English history and English grammar, and of course there was always Scripture. We learned our history from a book entitled *Little Folks' History of England*. I suppose, judged by modern standards, it was about as bad as it could be, but it certainly interested me, and, after all, what simple histories of England were there at the time ? There was Mrs. Markham, of course, and *Little Arthur*, but I cannot think of anything else. However, from *Little Folks' History* I acquired a wonderful knowledge of the kings and queens of England, and can to this day repeat correctly all their dates of accession and death. History and arithmetic were my favourite subjects, but I got on quite well with Latin.

At the beginning of my last year at the school a new top form was made, consisting of three boys—myself and two others—and

we worked together. I always did my preparation with one or other of these boys in alternate weeks. Both of them were hardworking and clever, and I think I learned almost as much by working with them as from the teachers. One of these boys I have never seen since I left the school ; the other I have seen once. I met him in the train in 1918, and he recognized me immediately, though he had not seen me for thirty-seven years. Just before I left, the school was examined by the College of Preceptors. One of the teachers acted as amanuensis for me, and I apparently did very well. This, however, I only discovered much later, for I was never told how I had done either by the teachers or by my parents—a mistake, I think, for I was not a conceited child, and the little encouragement would have done me good.

I can hardly imagine how they managed to teach me as much as they did. I could read sums and questions set on a slate if they were written large, and could write answers on a slate. A good deal of the work was of course done in classes orally, and I must have picked up something by hearing other boys translate. A certain amount of grammar and history was read to me at home by my mother, and I think Miss Fullicks gave me some private teaching in a corner of the class-room.

Two incidents that occurred while I was at the Doric College have always remained in my mind. There was a boy, whom I will call X, who was for some reason very unpopular. I think he was really quite a nice boy, but he was the kind of boy whom nobody could help ragging, and I am afraid he was rather bullied. Things got to such a pitch at last that Miss Fullicks called us all into the class-room and commanded us to write down on our slates exactly what we had said and done to X. I solemnly wrote down in my large, straggling, and almost illegible hand : ' Kicked him once or twice and called him stinker ' ! I must have been a truthful boy—or perhaps only very matter-of-fact. The other incident is this. After a Scripture lesson one of the younger mistresses announced that she thought it would be good for us if she told us each in turn our besetting sin—a most improper proceeding, I have always thought, and better done to us individually in private if it was to be done at all. One boy was told he was untruthful, another

was dishonest, and so on. Impatience was stated to be my besetting sin. But what annoyed me most was that my great friend Willie Inglis was let off altogether on the ground that he had not been long enough at the school for the mistress to discover what his besetting sin was !

I was on good terms with all the boys, but did not make many close friends, except Willie Inglis. He was a fine, manly boy, and I spent with him nearly every half-holiday most of the time I was at the school. During many holidays after I left, when I was in London, I was always with him, wandering about Kensington Gardens, playing all sorts of games and pranks, and eating sweets all the time. In those days every penny we could raise we spent on sweets, for which we had an absolute craving. Inglis was one of my closest friends until I was about twenty-five, when he unfortunately developed consumption, and died at an early age.

I had a happy childhood, only marred occasionally by a vague feeling that I was not quite like other children. But on the whole I did not realize my disadvantages.

It is difficult to form any decided judgment on my father's attitude towards my blindness. I know the effect it had on me as a child and upon my life in later years, but of course I cannot tell at all what difference it would have made to me had I been brought up as a blind child. Had I been sent to a school for the blind I should of course have learned to read Braille, to use a typewriter, and I probably should have been taught to find my way about more easily by myself. I should, in short, have become more independent. On the other hand, trying to keep pace with other boys and thinking I could do the things they did fostered in me a spirit of adventure which has probably stood me in good stead throughout my life. Although the effort has caused me constant disappointment, there has been on the whole a balance of good which I could not have realized had I known from the first that certain avenues were closed to me and certain activities beyond my reach. There is, I think, a good deal to be said for my father's attitude. I am sure he adopted it partly as the result of bitter disappointment, partly because he thought it would cause in me the minimum of pain. He might of course have done better to have adopted a middle

course, telling me frankly that I was blind, but at the same time showing me how much, notwithstanding, life might hold for me. He was in some ways a proud man, and was determined that he was not going to be beaten by this misfortune, but that his son, though blind, should hold his own with other people's children. Probably his whole attitude towards my blindness was the happiest he could have adopted from his own point of view, and for all I know it may in the long run have been the best for me.

III

PRIVATE TUTORS

IN 1881, when I was thirteen, the question arose as to what was to be done with me regarding my future education. The choice lay between living at home and going on to a larger private school in London, and a private tutor in the country. A tutor at home was, I think, not considered. My father made some inquiries, and as a result of these, on the recommendation of Dr. Walker, then High Master of St. Paul's, I was sent to a Mr. Cornish, an old friend of Walker's. I had never been away from home before except for a month when I was a boarder at the Doric College, my family being away with my brother, who was recovering from scarlet fever—a month I disliked exceedingly, as the other boarders were very rough and the food horrid. I remember, for instance, that we were given tinned crab and lobster for breakfast and that I came home with a very bad bilious attack. In January 1882 I set off with my father to Debenham, the village in Suffolk of which Mr. Cornish was vicar, full of excitement, and not minding leaving home nearly as much as my family minded my going.

Shortly before I went to Debenham, and for the first time since I was six months old, as far as I can discover, I was taken to a German oculist named Bada. My father kept a diary almost regularly from 1875 until his death in 1912; the entry for July 20th 1881 is: 'Took Harry to the oculist.' This is the only reference to my sight that I can find in the whole of his diaries. Dr. Bada recommended that I should use my eyes as much as possible and try to read with very strong glasses. But the glasses were only to be worn for reading; so through all the six years I was with Mr. Cornish and for two years afterwards I had to begin the morning's work with half an hour's reading to my tutor. The reading was done either from a Bible in very large print or from texts printed in very large type on cards. The texts were not much of a success, as my

tutor had not very many of them, and I soon learned them by heart, so that the first word or two were sufficient to give me the clue to the whole text. However, I read them slowly, with a mistake here and there, so he never discovered. This reading was always a terrible ordeal to me ; it was something the other boys did not do, and it made me feel uncomfortable. I used to sit by the window with my spectacles on and a heavy book held up close to my eyes, reading with the greatest difficulty. Sometimes I read to Mr. Cornish and sometimes to Mrs. Cornish, and they generally improved the occasion by a few comments on the passages I read, now and then treating me to an extract from some old-fashioned commentary. I believe that this was about the worst treatment my eyes could possibly have had, and this view has been confirmed by oculists I have consulted in later life.

Mr. Cornish was a man of forty-seven when I first went to him, but rather old for his years. He was a very big man physically, standing six feet three, and I should think weighing something like seventeen stone. He had been at Eton and Corpus, Oxford, where he took a second class in Law and History, and in 1882 he had been vicar of Debenham for twenty-two years. Debenham was a remote country village with a population of about one thousand. It was nine miles from a station and thirteen from Ipswich, the nearest town of any size. As Mr. Cornish rarely went away from Debenham except for short holidays, he had during his long residence there become a little out of touch with the outside world. By the time I knew him he had somewhat lost his interest in scholarship. He was not a great reader, but was more interested in outdoor pursuits, such as gardening and farming. He was a good deal occupied with the affairs of his parish and church, and being a kindly and good-natured man who took life easily, he was perhaps not strict enough with his pupils. Most of them were not particularly keen on work, and they had too many opportunities of slacking.

Mrs. Cornish was a very charming and cultivated woman, but unfortunately for all the latter part of her life an invalid, and in constant pain. She was often confined to her room for weeks at a time, and when she did come downstairs was obliged

to spend most of her days on a sofa. During my first four years as a pupil she was able to be downstairs a good deal, and I did much of my work with her. She also read aloud to me almost every evening, and we got through a good many novels—nearly all Scott, some Trollope, one or two George Eliots I can remember, and there must have been many others. I thoroughly enjoyed Scott. He is not popular with young people to-day, and, on re-reading some of his novels, I am not surprised. Mrs. Cornish had read widely, and had a real appreciation of good literature. She had an active mind, and, as is often the case with invalids, kept herself in closer contact with what was going on in the world around her than many more active persons. During the last two years of my stay she was upstairs all the time, and died shortly before I left. Her absence from amongst the pupils was a serious loss to us and to the whole household, and we suffered a good deal from the lack of feminine influence.

James, as he was always known to his father, Mr. Cornish, or Jim, as we always called him, was the mainstay of the house. He did a great deal of the teaching, and was constantly with the pupils, some of whom became his close friends. He has been a good friend to me all my life, and I owe very much to him. Our work in life has been along different lines, but I have always corresponded with him, and we still meet from time to time with the greatest pleasure. When I first went to Debenham Jim was only twenty-one. He had left Haileybury when he was seventeen, where he was in the Sixth Form. In the next three or four years he had been occupied as a private tutor to one or two boys, and of course when I first knew him he was in no sense an experienced teacher. In fact, he was for the first year or two of my time, while he was engaged in teaching us, taking lessons in not very high mathematics from a neighbouring clergyman. Considering his lack of training, however, he certainly did extraordinarily well, as he undoubtedly had a natural gift for teaching. He was a great reader himself, with an interest in a large variety of subjects and a remarkably retentive memory. He was also a very good naturalist, with a real love of the country, and I learnt from him much about the ways of birds and beasts and country

life generally. He taught me mathematics and read a good deal of history with me.

When Mrs. Cornish became too ill to come downstairs, Jim, in addition to his work with the pupils, took over all the house-keeping, which involved the management of a very quarrelsome and cantankerous old cook. This work must have been very trying for a man of his age and temperament, but he did it with extraordinary skill. The teaching and housekeeping took up a great deal of his time, and he had little society outside the pupils, who were all a good deal younger than himself, and many of them very stupid. In the latter part of my time I am afraid we all came to look upon him more in the light of a schoolmaster than a friend, and he must often have been very lonely. He was a most wonderful son. He stayed at home in order to enable his younger brother to go to the university, and he never failed to spend an hour or two each evening with his mother, recounting to her in great detail all the events of the day. The opportunity of going up to Oxford came to him later, but not until he was twenty-nine, when he entered the same college as myself, and at the same time. He obtained a First in History, and soon afterwards married and took Orders.

There were only two other pupils with me while I was at Debenham, both three years older than myself. They were very kind to me, and in fact I was rather the spoilt boy of the house. We had a delightful country life, and did a good deal of driving about in a dog-cart, which we hired in the village. I do not think we played any games except lawn tennis in the summer, but I had not then begun my activities in that direction. At the end of my first year Mr. Cornish was appointed to the rectory of Childrey, near Wantage in Berkshire, and to Childrey I went in January 1883, remaining there until July 1887. There were five or six pupils in all most of the time I was at Childrey. For one term the number dropped to two, and for about a year there were seven.

One of the two boys who was with me at Debenham was Hugo Mallet, the youngest son of Sir Louis Mallet, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for India ; he has been one of my lifelong friends. He came from a much more artistic and intellectual home than mine, and was able to introduce me to

a good many new interests. He was a real lover of music, and spent most of his spare time in playing the piano. He introduced me to Bach, Beethoven, and the other great composers, taught me new music, played my accompaniments, and I think I learned more from him than I did from a very inferior fiddler who gave me weekly lessons. Mallet came to Childrey for two terms, when, to my great regret, he left, going to another tutor and then to Cambridge.

The boys who went to private tutors in those days (and I fancy it is much the same now) either went because they were too delicate or too stupid to go to a public school, or because they were superannuated at public schools, or because the public schools found them too immoral to be tolerated. There were no doubt exceptions to this rule, but they were few and far between. Mallet had been for a time at Clifton, but he was a delicate boy and certainly unfitted for public school life. The bulk of my fellow-pupils came from the second class ; and though I do not think we had any from the third class, one or two of them were extremely coarse-minded, if not actually vicious. I do not wish to boast, but out of all the pupils who were with me during those six years Mallet and I took the best degrees, and we only got second classes. I do not think more than one other pupil took honours at all, and one or two of them took six or seven years to obtain a pass. Very few had any intellectual interests whatever, and, as I have hinted, some of them were not good companions. For about a year of my time the conversation amongst the pupils reached such a pitch of obscenity and profanity as I have never since heard, and the standard of decency and behaviour generally became very low.

I was seriously influenced for the worse by these surroundings, and by the time I was sixteen I had much deteriorated mentally, and I am afraid also to some extent morally. I had lost all interest in my work, scamping what I had to do, and resorting to every possible device for shirking. I was the ring-leader in all sorts of pranks devised to avoid work and to annoy my tutor and Jim, and in fact for a time I was not at all a nice boy. When I was fifteen I began to smoke a pipe, which was of course entirely against the rules, and, when I was discovered, after promising to give up the practice I very soon broke my

promise and started my pipe again. I seem to have been a born smoker, and can remember craving for tobacco when I was quite a boy, and I have never abandoned my pipe since I was fifteen. I was always rather nervous, and am inclined to think that the mild narcotic effects of tobacco have been actually good for me. This will probably be regarded by some as a mere excuse for a pernicious indulgence, but I believe, all the same, that it has been good for me. For the last three years I was at Childrey we all smoked on every possible occasion, and I think it would have been much better if we had been allowed to smoke in moderation, for as things were we smoked far too much, going for long walks mainly with the object of smoking, and smoking all the time we were out. My father took a very sensible view of this question. He allowed me to smoke in the holidays after I was first detected, on the condition that I did not smoke at Childrey. He even asked Mr. Cornish to allow me to smoke there, but Mr. Cornish, though he himself and Jim were inveterate smokers, was obdurate. Jim used to roll cigarettes for his father and place them on a table by the chair where he sat ; one of our games was to roll up a pencil in a cigarette paper, placing a little tobacco at each end, and Mr. Cornish's efforts to light the bogus cigarette caused us much amusement. He took this very good-humouredly, only remarking : ' One of you boys has been trying to make a fool of me.' We never got drunk, but most of us drank a great deal more beer than is usual amongst boys of the present day. We had as much beer as we liked for dinner and supper, and we hardly ever went for a long walk without having a glass or two at an inn on the way. We were all growing boys and taking a lot of exercise ; beer was beer in those days, and I think it did us good.

On Sunday evenings we had a Greek Testament lesson, and this was generally the purest farce. Nearly all the pupils had two-version Testaments, with the Greek on one page and the English on the other. They had to translate in turn, and managed very well, with the proper amount of halting and mistakes. In the course of these lessons Mr. Cornish was sometimes in the habit of reading us passages from Stanley's *Sinia and Palestine*. One of our devices was to hide this book

behind other books on the shelves in the study. Before the lesson had gone very far one of the pupils would say : ' I wish, sir, you would read us some more from Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine* ', whereupon Mr. Cornish, delighted at the request, would get up to fetch the book. We used to hear : ' I can't find my Stanley ', whereupon we of course all sprang up to help him in the search, leading him to other parts of the room whenever he became at all ' warm '. As the time for the end of the lesson came near the book would be triumphantly found by one of us, who was always most courteously thanked.

Mr. Cornish had some beautiful little Kerry cows which grazed in a field adjoining the garden. These cows were often found very useful in diminishing the time at our books. Before going into work in the morning the gate from the field to the garden would be carefully left open, and, sure enough, before the morning was very far advanced, some one would call out : ' The cows have got into the garden, sir ! ' Whereupon Mr. Cornish would rush out, followed by all the pupils, eager to help him drive them back into the field. The driving back was so organized as to take a very long time. But we were again always thanked for our help ! I am afraid I was sometimes guilty of tricks more dishonourable than these. Once or twice another boy and I asked leave to go to a neighbouring church in the afternoon instead of attending the village church at Childrey. We went for a long walk on the Downs, never entering a church at all, after which we had the audacity at tea-time to speak in the highest terms of the sermon we were supposed to have heard.

During my last three years at Childrey I really did hardly any work at all. I took no interest in what I was taught, and half the time did not attend when I was being read aloud to. But I do not think this was altogether my fault. When I first went to Debenham I was certainly a promising pupil, but subjects which I had taken at school were gradually dropped. Mr. Cornish said that I could not learn Greek, but I did continue Latin for a time, reading with him Cornelius Nepos (the dullest of authors), Mr. Cornish reading out the Latin and I trying to construe. I also did a certain amount of Livy and Caesar. After about two years, however, Mr. Cornish

decided that there was no use in my going on with Latin. For a time I did a certain amount of French with Mrs. Cornish, but that was also abandoned. I was certainly extremely bad at languages, but I should of course have been made to learn Latin and French, and there is no reason whatever why I should not have begun Greek before the age of twenty, when I had the greatest difficulty in getting up even the small amount required for Responsions at Oxford. Most of my time was spent over history and mathematics. I went through the first six books of Euclid with Jim, and got as far as conic sections. I was always fond of arithmetic and algebra until the period when I began to hate all work, but never, I think, went much beyond the binomial theorem. After I lost interest I imagine I must have become exceedingly difficult to teach ; otherwise I might have gone much farther in my mathematical studies. A good deal of history was read aloud to me, but without sufficient comment or explanation : Green's *Short History of the English People*, the whole of Macaulay's *History of England*, and some of Bright's *History of England*. I also read some of Grote, and remember being particularly interested in Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, Creasy's *Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World*, and Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico* and *Conquest of Peru*. But it was all desultory reading, without any plan, and although it will hardly be believed, it is nevertheless true that I never in my life wrote an essay, or, with the exception of the one occasion at school already mentioned, did an examination paper until I went up to Oxford. I suppose my difficulty in writing is a partial explanation of this, but surely I could have been taught to dictate.

While I was at Childrey I had my first introduction to Economics, or Political Economy, as it was then universally called, and read Mrs. Fawcett's *Political Economy*, together with a few chapters of Adam Smith. This certainly interested me very much, but I never took up the subject again until I went to Oxford. This small amount of reading did, however, have the effect of making me think a little about economic questions, and I always pricked up my ears when economic matters were being discussed by my elders.

As a slight justification of myself with regard to my idleness

during these years it is only fair to say that my conscience did sometimes reproach me. When I was nearly seventeen I begged my father to take me away from Childrey on the ground that I was not making proper progress with my work. But he said he was quite satisfied, and would not consider the idea of my leaving. So I remained for another year and half.

All the time I was at Childrey I worked hard at my violin, and practised regularly, my teacher being William Hill, the organist at Wantage. He was a beautiful organist, a good pianist, and a fine musician. He is even now well known as the composer of a large number of marches, his March in G being perhaps the best known of these. Unfortunately, however, he knew very little about the violin ; but he did teach me much new music. He was a most delightful and amusing man, and a great friend of the pupils. We often had tea with him in his little house at Wantage, where we spent many happy hours.

As far as I know the question as to what I was to do when I left Childrey had never been discussed between my father and Mr. Cornish until just before I did leave, if then, and my father never raised the question with me. Mr. Cornish had occasionally told me that I ought to be Chancellor of the Exchequer some day ! Why he thought so I do not know, but he certainly did not take the necessary steps to fit me for this high office, nor did he suggest any arrangements for the future which might help to prepare me for the position, or even for taking up a political career. Like most boys, I had at one time thought I should like to be a clergyman. The thought of preaching rather appealed to me, and I liked the idea of bossing a parish. However, this did not last long. Otherwise I do not think I had thought at all about a profession or about my future career.

It is possible that my father at the back of his mind may have realized that I was blind and that he probably regarded a profession or any definite work for a blind man as an impossibility. Just before I left Childrey in 1887 he once more consulted Walker of St. Paul's, who simply said in his brusque way, ' Send him to college ', and this advice my father

decided to take. He had at first some idea of my going up to Cambridge as an unattached student and boarding with a middle-aged curate he knew, who had no degree, but who had recently gone up to Cambridge with a view to graduating there. He does not seem to have realized in the least that I was quite incapable of passing the simplest Matriculation, and that Responsions or Little-Go was quite out of the question. Why he should have thought that I could go to Oxford or Cambridge then I have never been able to imagine, for he knew I had never learned Greek and that I had done no Latin for two or three years. However, he made inquiries at Cambridge and Oxford, and of course very soon discovered that some knowledge of both Greek and Latin was essential. The only thing to be done, therefore, was to find another tutor for me, and in the autumn of 1887 I was sent off to Mr. Cooper, the vicar of Fornsett St. Mary, a village in Norfolk about eleven miles from Norwich.

My father explained to Mr. Cooper that he wished me to go up to Cambridge, and he was to discover whether I was capable of doing so, and particularly whether it would be possible for me to learn the amount of Greek required. Under the circumstances Mr. Cooper was a curious choice, as he was above all things a mathematician. He was a ninth wrangler, and had been a Fellow of St. John's, Cambridge. He had become vicar of Fornsett in 1853, and held the living until a year or two before his death at the age of ninety-one in 1914. He was sixty-four when I went to him, and he was a real student by nature, never going out of his study if he could help it unless he was driven out for short walks by Mrs. Cooper or had to go to his church or attend to some parochial matter. What he did in his study I was never quite able to make out. I think he read a good deal of theology, and he was constantly working at mathematical problems. He had one very difficult problem in particular which he did when he was getting tired, in order to test the clearness of his brain. If he could do it, he was all right ; if he could not, he had a rest. He was an active old man, and had rather an alarming way when he was teaching of jumping out of his chair, snatching up the paraffin lamp off the table, and swarming up a ladder to the top shelves of his

bookcases with the lamp in his hand. On other occasions he would seize the lamp, rush from the room—pushing open the swing baize door with the lamp—and charge down a passage containing two steps into the dining-room to find a book, the lamp rocking in his hand as he ran. He always became absolutely absorbed in what he was doing at the moment, and somehow or other the house was never burnt down as a result of these activities. The family at the vicarage consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Cooper and two daughters aged twenty-two and fourteen, and a sister of Mr. Cooper's, an old lady of seventy-eight, who was stone deaf. She died a few months after I went to live there.

For a whole year I was the only pupil, and had no young men companions all that time, nor did I have much young companionship in the holidays. Just when I left Childrey we settled permanently at Higham. Up to that time I had always spent some part of my holidays in London, where I had boy friends, but during the two years I was at Forncett I spent my holidays at Higham, where I had very few friends of my own age. I saw nothing of Mallet, who had taken his degree at Cambridge and gone to work at Bristol, while Inglis was out of England. Apart from one expedition to Stoney Middleton with my father and my uncle, Tom Sanderson, I do not think I went out of Norfolk and Suffolk all the time—not even to London.

I owe a great deal to my uncle, Tom Sanderson. He was much younger than my father and mother, and I always regarded him as a young man. He did not marry until he was forty, and during his bachelor days was constantly in our house. He was one of the heroes of my boyhood, and I was his constant companion when he came to us in the summer holidays. In some respects he was a remarkable man. He came over from America when he was thirteen, went to school in Sheffield, and on to Wadham College, Oxford, where he seems to have led a somewhat wild and idle life; for although he had quite exceptional abilities he only took a Pass degree. He was well off, and after leaving Oxford settled down to a bachelor life in London, where he had rooms in St. James's Street, spending most of his time at his club. Though

he was naturally sociable, he was, like my mother, extraordinarily reserved and slow to make friends, and he gradually settled down almost to the life of a recluse, developing, however, into an omnivorous reader and a close student of history. He led a curious life, getting up very late in the morning, lunching at his club, and then walking for miles about London, of which he had an extraordinary knowledge ; then, returning to his rooms, he would read far into the night. During these years he made an elaborate study of eighteenth-century history, collecting quite a good library of the literature of the period. Though he never wrote anything, most of his books are elaborately annotated. He had a most remarkable memory, and when he could be persuaded to talk he would talk brilliantly and display the most astounding knowledge of what he had read. It was probably a real loss to the world that he did not make more use of his stores of learning and distinct literary powers. We were all devoted to him, and I as a boy and young man learnt a great deal from hearing him talk. It was a great blow to us when he announced that he was going to be married, for we had come to regard him as a permanent bachelor uncle. However, our new, young, and very beautiful aunt soon became a great favourite with us, and in subsequent years I had many happy times with them and their children.

Life at Forncett was a great change for me after the cheery party of boys at Childrey. The two girls were very good to me, and my exercise as a rule took the form of long afternoon walks with them ; very occasionally I went for walks with Mr. Cooper ; sometimes I took walks by myself, but this was discouraged. I spent a good deal of time roaming alone about the garden and performing on a horizontal bar and some parallel bars which had been rigged up in a shed. I was not allowed to smoke in the house, and I sometimes had a smoke with the gardener in the harness-room, for he was almost my only male companion. I was often exceedingly lonely, but I worked very hard, partly because there was nothing much else to do, but also because Mr. Cooper aroused in me a new interest in study. One great resource there was, however, outside my work : Miss Cooper was a beautiful musician and a first-rate pianist, and I spent much of my

spare time playing the violin with her. I had weekly lessons from a second-rate fiddler from Norwich, and practised as much as I could. Mr. Cooper himself was very fond of music, and had one of the most beautiful bass voices I ever heard.

As to my studies, I read a good deal of history with Miss Cooper, who was an exceptionally well-educated girl, but my work with Mr. Cooper consisted almost entirely of mathematics. I dare say this was necessary, for owing to my slackness during the last two years at Childrey I had forgotten most of what Jim had taught me, and Mr. Cooper certainly gave me a new interest in mathematics. I did a certain amount of Latin with him and a certain amount of theology. I remember for instance his insisting on reading to me Paley's *Natural Theology*—famous in connexion with Paley's watch. It was only after I had been at Forncett for more than six months that Mr. Cooper decided I had better begin Greek and go up to Hertford College, Oxford. One of his sons had recently been made a Fellow of that College, and Mr. Cooper thought that his son could make things easy for me with regard to matriculation. I learned the Greek alphabet, and even to write Greek in my my awkward way with the aid of slates and chalk, and I got a fair idea of Greek grammar by the end of the year. But it was decided that another year at Forncett would be necessary before I was ready to go up for matriculation at Hertford.

I was then joined by two other pupils, one a boy of sixteen who had been expelled from Eton for drunkenness, and the other a boy who had had to leave his school—I forget which it was—owing to his extraordinary backwardness. They were not very attractive companions, but they were boys, and more or less of my own age. The Eton boy had more than one lapse while he was at Forncett. He was sent down from Cambridge at the end of his first term there, and died as a young man as a result of his weakness. It was a melancholy case, for he was in many ways a clever and attractive boy when I knew him. The other boy was quite hopeless, and our work was constantly disturbed by this sort of thing: Mr. Cooper would say to him: ' $a + a = 2a$, and $a \times a = a^2$ ' over and

over again, and at the end of the performance the boy would be sure to say : ' $a + a = a^2$.' But I believe he afterwards did quite good work in the Canadian Mounted Police.

During this year I worked on much the same lines as those of the year before, doing of course more Latin and Greek, but still a great deal more mathematics than was necessary for my purpose, largely, I think, because Mr. Cooper enjoyed doing problems with me. The result of the year's work was that I did not even then know enough Greek for matriculation at Hertford. But the Hertford authorities very generously decided that if I could do well enough in the other subjects and show there was a chance of my passing Responsions in a year's time, I might come up for a year. It may appear that I was extraordinarily slow in learning Greek, and I think I was, but it must be remembered that I was not naturally good at languages, and that I was also doing a good deal of other unnecessary work ; not enough time was given to Greek. Again, I had fairly long holidays, and these were an absolute blank as regards work, no one ever suggesting that I should do a stroke in the holidays.

Mr. Cooper was a man of remarkable personality, with a very lovable character. Although he had spent most of his life at Forncett, he had kept his mind alive, and was full of interest in what was going on in the world around him and in many of the problems of his day. I learned from listening to him much which lay outside my immediate studies. He often read aloud in the evening articles of special interest from *The Times* or other newspapers, and magazine articles. I learned from him much about Church matters of that time, and my interest in economics was once more stimulated in connexion with the question of bimetallism. This question was gradually coming to the front while I was at Forncett, and Mr. Cooper strongly espoused the bimetallic side of the controversy. This subject, as will appear later, occupied my mind a good deal in after years. I was exceedingly fond of Mr. Cooper and his family, and regarded them all as real friends. No one could have been kinder to me, and if only I had had some congenial boy companions my time at Forncett would have been thoroughly happy.

I was now twenty-one ; my education had continued for thirteen years, and at the end of it I did not know nearly enough to pass Responsions at Oxford. I was very young for my age, knowing little of life or of the world. In addition to this the isolation of the last two years had made me exceedingly shy and awkward. Of course my blindness was always a great handicap, and for several years I had been extremely idle, which left me much leeway to make up while I was at Forncett. But I worked very hard during those two years, and as I believe I was up to the average boy in ability I cannot help thinking there was something defective in the education I received, or in the methods of my teachers during the time I spent with private tutors.

With regard to my blindness, a third oculist had been consulted soon after I went to Forncett. He said there was nothing to be done, so I continued on the lines recommended by the man I had seen when I was thirteen, and tried to use my eyes as much as possible.

My experiences at private tutors' have convinced me that no boy should go to a private tutor who can get his education in any other way. There are boys who cannot go to a public school, and there are homes where it is undesirable that a son should work with a tutor. There are of course good private tutors in the country and elsewhere. But these, I think, are even now few and far between, and, however good the tutor may be, the fellow-pupils with whom a boy will have to associate are almost sure to be of the type I have described, and to have been driven to a private tutor for the reasons I have given—delicacy, stupidity, or bad conduct.

On the whole I am inclined to think that the ideal education is to be found in a good public day school, such, for example, as Westminster, St. Paul's, or Manchester Grammar School, where a boy can live at home, for in this way home life and school life can be combined. Boarding schools have a tendency to separate a boy too much from his family. But to be satisfactory the public day school plan necessitates a somewhat ideal home, with parents who are really interested in the educational welfare of their boys. There are unfortunately many homes where such conditions do not exist, and in

these cases the ordinary public school is probably the only solution.

To decide upon what is the best form of education for a blind boy, however, is not an easy matter. The ordinary preparatory and public schools are practically out of the question, for it is impossible for a blind boy to receive the individual tuition which is essential. I no doubt learnt a good deal at my private schools, but I could have learnt much more had it been possible for the teacher to give me the special attention which was necessary in my case. I did manage to get to the top of my school, but I was taught largely by the other two boys in the top class. The school, however, was small, and the standard of work in those days was not very high. Such an arrangement would hardly be tolerated, even if it were possible, in the modern preparatory and public school.

A private tutor at home is a possibility, but the success of this plan depends to a certain extent on how far the parents have sufficient imagination to understand the bringing up of blind children ; and to my mind a far greater difficulty lies in the danger to the child of being cut off from the companionship of other boys and so learning nothing of the ' give and take ' of life.

Lastly, there are the schools for the blind. The objection to these is that the boy is brought up in a blind atmosphere ; but it should be possible to counteract the effects of this environment by providing him with plenty of intercourse with sighted children in the holidays. The problem of my own education was, I think, a little complicated from my parents' point of view by the fact that I was not *totally* blind, but if I were the parent of a child even as blind as I was I think, on the whole, I should send him to a school for the blind.

IV

OXFORD

I WENT up to Oxford in the Michaelmas term of 1889, when I was just twenty-one, arriving with my father at the Randolph Hotel a few days before term for the Hertford Matriculation Examination. I did quite well in my Latin books—Caesar, I think—and in my Latin grammar paper. My Euclid was all right, but I completely broke down in arithmetic. At this I was almost heart-broken, as I thought it was the one subject in which I was safe. Arithmetic was not easy for me in an examination, as I had first to take down the sums on a slate from the dictation of an amanuensis, then work them out on the slate, and dictate to him the main lines of the process, with the answers. I was horribly nervous; I did not much like my amanuensis, who was a complete stranger to me, and these were the first examination papers I had ever seen. As I have said before, it seems never to have entered either of my tutors' heads to make me work occasionally under examination conditions.

The Hertford authorities decided at first that they could not admit me, and it was only through the efforts of Mr. Cooper's son,¹ one of the Fellows of the College, that they were persuaded to change their mind. They eventually allowed me to come up for a year on the understanding that I passed Responsions not later than the following September. At the end of my first term the mathematical tutor, G. S. Ward, set me an arithmetic paper to see how I was getting on. I did the whole thing correctly without a mistake. In fact, I did it so well that Ward hinted to my amanuensis that he must have helped me—to his very great annoyance.

Hertford College had been refounded only fifteen years before I went up, and it was in one sense a comparatively new college, though, as a matter of fact, it is one of the oldest foundations

¹ H. B. Cooper, afterwards Tutor of Keble.

in the university. There were only about seventy-five undergraduates when I was up, and this small number made it a very sociable place, with an absence of cliques. The various years mixed together well, fourth-year men often making friends with freshmen. We had a remarkable group of young Fellows, most of whom had been appointed just before I came up. These included W. R. Inge, afterwards Dean of St. Paul's; Hastings Rashdall, a very distinguished philosopher and historian, afterwards Dean of Carlisle; A. H. J. Greenidge, a brilliant Roman historian who died young; G. C. Richards, afterwards Fellow of Oriel, Vicar of St. Mary's, Oxford, and Professor of Philosophy at Durham; A. B. Poynton, afterwards Bursar of University and Public Orator of the University; J. E. Campbell, the mathematician; and C. E. Haselfoot, the scientist. Amongst the older Fellows there was C. N. Jackson, famous in the athletic world.

There was very little intimacy between the Fellows and the undergraduates—less than there is nowadays in most colleges. This may have been partly because most of the Fellows were young, and some of them very shy. One or two of them appeared almost frightened of undergraduates. Rashdall, though himself very shy, was the most sociable of them, and he made great friends with some of his pupils. He sometimes kindly asked me to tea with him, but I think that was because I lived on his staircase. J. H. Maude, the Dean, also tried hard to make friends with us, and Jackson was of course popular with everybody, and especially with the athletic men.

The Principal was Dr. Henry Boyd. He was appointed in 1877, and held the position until his death in 1922 at the age of ninety-one. This was rather a remarkable feat, for shortly before coming to Hertford he had had such a bad breakdown in health that his recovery was regarded as almost hopeless. He had been for many years a hard-working clergyman in the Isle of Dogs, but had to give up his work there owing to this illness. He was a great friend of T. C. Baring, who re-endowed the College, and Baring was instrumental in his appointment. The undergraduates saw little of him, but he made a point of having each of us to breakfast or luncheon every term in groups of four or five. I, however, came to know him quite

well in later days. He took little interest in academic studies, but he was a shrewd man of the world and a good man of business, as was made evident during his term of office as Vice-Chancellor. It is said that when a new Fellow was elected Boyd used to say to him: 'Now, whatever you do, don't become too learned'—strange advice perhaps to give to a young man who was about to devote his life to study and teaching, but the Principal probably realized that education is something more than the reading of books alone.

Boyd was a well-known figure in Oxford. Until he was long past eighty he was nearly always to be seen watching a match during the football season, without a great-coat, however cold the weather. He was quite a good artist and a very keen fisherman. For years he spent the Long Vacations in Norway, where he owned a large stretch of salmon-fishing, and at one time an hotel. He told me once that as a young man he had ridden on horseback over a great part of Europe. He was wonderfully good company even when a very old man, and he had a delightful dry humour about him, which was always kindly.

My father, before returning home on the first Monday in term, engaged for me a young man of twenty-three named Steele, who was to read aloud, help me generally with my work, and take me about to lectures, etc. Steele had only been to an elementary school, and he was when my father engaged him an assistant in a chemist's shop in Oxford. So his experience in the kind of work for which I wanted him was of the most meagre description. He was an excellent fellow, and worked hard to make himself as useful to me as possible, but he was, of course, quite unaccustomed to books, and was not at first at all a good reader, and naturally could not read either Latin or Greek. For a time it was very uphill work for both of us; but somehow or other I taught him to read both Greek and Latin sufficiently for me to understand him. Jim Cornish came up to Hertford at the same time as myself, and my father arranged with him to coach me in my Latin and Greek books three times a week during term.

I can see now that the best thing I could have done would have been to devote three months to learning Braille and the

typewriter, and if I had done this I should have got through my work a good deal more quickly than was possible with the aid of Steele. But I did not know how long it would take me to learn Braille, and felt that every moment was required for my work if I was to pass Smalls at the end of the year. Besides this, I did not even now regard myself as a blind man. In my first term I met a man who had come up from the Worcester School for the Blind. He did all his work with the aid of Braille and a typewriter, and got on very much better than I did, ultimately obtaining a First in Law. But, oddly enough, I regarded him as a *blind* man, and not as *another* blind man. As it was, then, I set to work in the only way which seemed practicable for me.

My College tutor was C. N. Jackson—‘Jacky’, as we always called him—a delightful man, but perhaps, on the whole, more successful in connexion with athletics than as a tutor. However, he knew the elements of the subjects he taught very well, and he also had a wonderful knowledge of the weaknesses and difficulties of the ordinary Pass man. He had classes in Latin prose and Latin grammar, which I attended, and I went to Ward twice a week for arithmetic. This was all the tuition I had from the College, and I do not think I went to any lectures during my first year. Most of my time was spent with Steele and Jim struggling with my Latin and Greek books. How I loathed Caesar and how I hated those two Greek plays—the *Hecuba* and the *Alcestis*! It was certainly a great day for many a young man who has as little taste for the classics as I had—and there are many of them—when compulsory Greek was abolished at Oxford.

I took Steele home with me for the Christmas vacation and did a certain amount of work during that time; and in the Easter vacation I went for three weeks to Forncett and worked hard with Mr. Cooper. In the Long Vacation I had another six weeks at Forncett, and in September, to my great joy, succeeded in passing Responsions. I should think I worked seven hours a day on the average most of that year, and very dull and tedious work it was.

The question which then had to be settled was for what Final School I was to read. As to this, my father made no

suggestions as far as I can remember, and the matter was left for me to arrange with the Hertford tutors. I had quite made up my mind to read for the History School, but another examination was necessary before I could begin on my history, and there were alternatives as to that. I, being keen on mathematics, was ambitious enough to wish to take Mathematical Moderations, and I consulted J. E. Campbell. He wisely dissuaded me from this adventure, pointing out that the work would be very difficult for me, and that at the most I could not expect to get more than a third class. Great pressure was then put on me by Jackson to take Pass Moderations, but I turned my attention to the Law Preliminary. Jackson hated any departures from the ordinary routine; he knew nothing about the Law Preliminary, which was then quite a new School, and he could not bear anything new. I remember that after I came back to Oxford many years later he asked me to go and see him. When I arrived he said he wanted to know something about the Diploma in Economics, which had recently been introduced. 'A German fellow here,' he said, 'wants to take it, and I don't know anything about the thing.' I asked him if he had not had the papers sent out by the Secretary of the Committee for Economics, and he said: 'Oh, I suppose so, but I haven't read them. You tell me about it.' So I proceeded to explain what was required for the examination. Before I got half-way through, however, he said: 'That's all right, Furniss; thank you very much. I think I shall be able to choke the chap off now!'

However, I was determined to have nothing more to do with the classics, and so set to work to read for the additional subject in Smalls which was required in connexion with the Law Preliminary. I took Logic as an additional subject, going twice a week to Jackson, together with a Merton man. Jackson gave me all the necessary tips, and I was able to get up what was required and to pass quite successfully at the end of the Michaelmas term 1890.

The Law Preliminary was a more serious business. I took up Bacon's *Novum Organum* in Latin, some books of Justinian, Taswell-Langmead's *Constitutional History*, and I also had to prepare myself to face a piece of Latin unseen. The Bacon I

read with H. B. Cooper, going to him three times a week, and also occasionally took him some Latin unseens. The Justinian and the Taswell-Langmead I mugged up by myself with the aid of Steele. I rather enjoyed the Bacon and became quite interested in Justinian. Taswell-Langmead is of course quite a useful book, but it *is* dull. The unseens I found a terrible nuisance. I went to an excellent course of lectures on Justinian by J. B. Moyle of New College. He very kindly gave me some useful advice about my reading, and at his suggestion I did a paper for him which he criticized in a most helpful manner.

I succeeded in passing the Law Preliminary in June 1891, but I was told afterwards that my unseen very nearly did for me. I was vivaed by Charles Cannan, who was then a Fellow of Trinity and whose famous lectures on Logic were still in full swing. He only asked me some questions on Bacon's *Novum Organum*, and seemed quite pleased with my paper, possibly because it contained one or two disparaging remarks on J. S. Mill! Perhaps I may have known that one of Cannan's favourite dictas was: 'The man Mill lies!'

At the end of this term I went to see Arthur Johnson¹ of All Souls, who became my tutor for the rest of my time at Oxford. But before doing so I had had another altercation with some of the Hertford authorities, who were strongly opposed to my reading history and tried to insist on my taking a Pass. One of the reasons may have been that there was then no historian in the College, but I think what weighed much more with them was their belief that I was not good enough to attempt an Honours School. However, I flatly refused to take a Pass and they reluctantly gave way. Johnson advised me to take the Seventeenth Century as a special subject, and told me to read Dyer's *Modern Europe* during the Long Vacation.

Then came the troublesome question of what we at that time called 'Divinners', which has now been still further contracted to 'Divvers', the examination which is more correctly known as the First Public Examination in Holy Scripture—a most absurd examination which ought to have been abolished years ago. It meant practically nothing to a fair scholar, but it was then (in the days when the Gospels had to be taken in

¹ The Rev. A. H. Johnson, Fellow and Chaplain of All Souls.

Greek) a most tiresome interruption to the work of a man who had only taken the Greek required for Responsions, and who had forgotten most of that. There is not enough of the subject to give anybody a real knowledge of the New Testament, and the way it is generally treated is not such as to increase respect for the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles.

I worked about five hours a day for six weeks of this Long Vacation at my two Gospels and the Acts, as I wanted to make sure of passing in October. I made a list of all the Greek words I did not know—and they were a good many—with their English equivalents, and learned the list by heart, and I made an elaborate analysis of the Acts. I did rather a good paper, I believe, and was asked only two questions in my viva. These were: 'How many times is the Mount of Olives mentioned in St. John's Gospel?' and 'Who were the reigning Roman Emperors during the period covered by the Acts of the Apostles?' Somehow or other I knew the answers to both these ridiculous questions. The man who was vivaed just before me was less fortunate. I heard him asked question after question without any response at all except: 'I don't know.' At last the examiner asked him whether he could think of any differences at all between the Gospel of St. Matthew and the Gospel of St. John. After some thought he blurted out triumphantly: 'Oh, yes; Matthew was a publican!'

Apart from the work for Divvers I worked through most of the Long Vacation at Dyer's *Modern Europe*, but I did not then know how to read history properly, and took no notes. So I missed many of the essential points, and the book failed to stick in my memory. At the beginning of the next term Johnson set me a Collection paper on European history in the seventeenth century, when I did very badly indeed, and was terribly discouraged.

In this Long Vacation I made my first trip abroad, going to Belgium with my father and brother for about ten days. We visited Brussels, Antwerp, Bruges, and Ghent, and saw most of the usual sights, including the field of Waterloo, and a vast number of churches. My father was a great sightseer, and would do everything thoroughly, going round the churches with

guides. He liked me to go with him on his sightseeing expeditions, though of course I could not appreciate half of what I saw. I did, however, sometimes get a hazy idea of the size and grandeur of the buildings we visited. He more often took my elder sister, May (who was blinder than I), on his expeditions in England. He even used to take her with him to the Royal Academy, and it was really pathetic to hear her describe most intelligently pictures of which she had been told but which she could never have seen.

In October 1891 I began to read for the History School in real earnest, and I worked pretty steadily for seven hours a day during term time and five hours a day in vacations. I took a weekly essay to Johnson, and went to a certain number of lectures, but this was all the actual teaching I had. In addition to Steele I had a good professional reader for two hours almost every evening from nine to eleven in term time.

Arthur Johnson was one of the most peppery and at the same time one of the most lovable men I have ever known. He had, by the time I knew him, acquired a very wide knowledge of the subjects he taught, and he had a large experience as a teacher. He was a severe critic, with a hatred of slovenly work. But he set a very high standard, and was extraordinarily stimulating and encouraging as long as one did one's best. He always seemed to know if his pupils were doing the best work they could, and only came down on them when they had been taking things too easily and when they deserved it. He was not really hard on the weaker men. With regard to the high standard he set, I remember him saying once : ' Now, you can't perhaps all of you get Firsts, but most of you can if you try, and at any rate I'm going to teach you as if you were all going to get Firsts.' I went to him as one of a class of four or five, so I received hardly any individual tuition. However, in my fourth year Johnson did very kindly let me come and see him sometimes with an essay or paper in the evening at his house in Merton Street—occasions when he was generally in very good form after a long day's hunting, though perhaps a little bored with history. In the class one of the essays was read aloud by its writer, and then criticized by Johnson, who talked for all the rest of the hour—as a rule quite brilliantly.

His criticisms were often very severe, sometimes almost savage, such as : ' This is all absolute rubbish ' or ' I never heard such rot in my life.' When my turn came he himself read the essay aloud, punctuating the reading with : ' I don't know what that means,' or ' Style ! style ! ' and so on. But we all soon became so fond of him that we took his irascible scoldings in good part, and in fact rather enjoyed them. It was only ' the Johnner '. On one occasion, however, when Johnson had been particularly violent, I do remember a man who did not know him well or understand his methods suddenly losing his temper and bursting out with : ' Look here, sir, I'm not going to stand this sort of thing. I'm not accustomed to be spoken to in this way ! ' Johnson broke into a hearty laugh, and said : ' My dear fellow, don't be a damned fool ! I'm paid to insult you ! ' His bark was always worse than his bite, as he himself once reminded me many years later, when my wife and I had been lunching with the Johnsons in their house in South Parks Road. In the course of the conversation at luncheon Johnson had practically called my wife a liar, but as we were saying good-bye he said to her : ' Never mind what I said—my bark's always worse than my bite : he'll tell you '—pointing to me. When I came back to Oxford I learned to regard him as a great friend and to appreciate even better than I had done as a pupil his fine character and warm-hearted, affectionate nature. His death in 1927 was a real loss to me, as I know it was to many generations of pupils.

Johnson took great pains with the correction of my essays, for the essays which were not read at the class were left with him, and his comments helped me a great deal. I found essay-writing very difficult for some time, as, owing to want of practice, I was extraordinarily bad at expressing myself. However, I seem gradually to have improved, for just before I went in for my Finals Johnson told me, to my great surprise, that he thought I wrote rather well.

In this year I began to go to a course of lectures of Johnson's on Political History, but I always thought him less successful as a lecturer than as a teacher. I told him that I thought I could do better by myself than by attending his lectures, and he said : ' Well, don't go to them ; I don't think they're very

much good myself ! ' On the whole, with one exception, I did not gain much from lectures. I went to A. L. Smith on Political Science, to Lodge on Constitutional History, to Edwards of Lincoln on English Political History, to Firth on the Seventeenth Century, and probably to some others whom I have forgotten. To one lecturer I owe a lasting debt of gratitude, for he awoke what has been one of my main interests in life—Economics. The lecturer was L. R. Phelps, then Fellow, afterwards Provost, of Oriel. Lectures as a rule were less useful to me than to men who could see, because I could not take notes, and Steele was not good enough to take them for me. Phelps's style of lecturing, however, exactly suited me. He was remarkably eloquent, and poured out his material, beautifully arranged, in what amounted to a speech lasting fifty minutes. He absolutely refused to allow any note-taking, but the last ten minutes of the hour he spent in dictating a most carefully worded summary of what he had been saying—a summary I could remember almost verbally, at any rate until I could get back to my rooms and chalk it down. He would now and then stop in the course of his harangue, turning generally on some unfortunate girl who had disobeyed his injunction about note-taking, and say : ' As I said before I began, I need not trouble you to take notes, thank you.' I do not remember much about the matter of the lectures now, except that they set my mind working upon economic questions, and made me decide to read as much economics as possible. One of Phelps's epigrams I do remember. He used to say with regard to Socialism : ' Socialism involves a change in human nature which, if it could be brought about, would make Socialism unnecessary.' This remained in the back of my mind for a long time, and I think helped to bolster up the strong bias I then had towards individualism. It is, after all, only one of those less than half-truths containing epigrams which are so dangerous and misleading if they are taken seriously.

The result of my newly-awakened interest in Economics was that I devoted far too much of my time to this subject from the point of view of the History School, in which at that time we had only half a paper on Economic Theory, the other half being on Economic History. I paid insufficient attention to

other subjects, especially early English constitutional history and Stubbs's *Charters*. I never could get up any enthusiasm for early English constitutional history, and never could succeed in translating the *Charters*. In fact, I am afraid I didn't try very hard. I became tremendously absorbed in the Bimetallic Controversy, which I had before often discussed with Mr. Cooper at Forncett. I was a violent bimetallist then, and tried to drag the subject into nearly all my essays, much to Johnson's annoyance. In fact, I was almost as bad as a Marxian or a Single Taxer. I read J. S. Mill with great ardour, and in those days was a good deal influenced by F. A. Walker. But Mill, I think, set me thinking more than Walker. I enjoyed his broad sweep and his lucid style. I spent a great deal of time on the theory of value, being led to this by Mill's remarks on the fundamental importance of a true theory of value and his belief that at the time when he wrote ¹ there was nothing left to clear up with regard to the theory. I was convinced that there *was* still a good deal to clear up, especially after reading Jevons's *Theory of Political Economy*. My mind was always working round the futile question as to whether value was determined by the cost of production or by utility. I remember being told about this time that a great book had come out which had cleared up everything not only with regard to value, but with regard to Economics generally. It was *the* book on Economics. The book in question was of course Marshall's *Principles*. I, who, like most young men, wanted and expected to find cut and dried answers, yes or no, to all the questions I raised, rushed to Marshall full of hope, and I shall never forget my disappointment when I began to read him—a disappointment I think which has always made me less appreciative of Marshall's work than I should be.

A special subject was required for candidates in the History School who aimed at obtaining a First or Second Class, but I had quite made up my mind that a Third Class was the most I could expect. In the Michaelmas Term of 1892, therefore, I announced to Johnson that I did not intend to take a special subject, an announcement which was received by him with : 'Nonsense ; of course you'll take a special subject', and it

¹ J. S. Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*, Bk. III, Ch. I, Sec. 2.

was decided that I should take the Great Rebellion. This added to my labours considerably, and I spent a great part of the next Christmas vacation at Faringdon in Berkshire, working with Jim Cornish, who had taken his degree at the end of his third year and who was then a curate at Faringdon. I think I put in a solid eight hours a day while I was there.

In the schools I did moderately well with most of my papers, except the paper on Early Constitutional History, of which I answered only three questions, and two of these very shortly. My great difficulty was to get enough down, and I was told afterwards that the shortness of some of my answers affected my class. But my ignorance of Stubbs's *Charters* probably had much more to do with it. Still, I have never regretted that I failed to get a First through my neglect of Stubbs for the sake of Economics, if this *were* the case, for the interest in Economics which I acquired while reading for the History School has been much more valuable to me than a First Class could have been. Possibly it may be said to this that if I had had more judgment I might have attained both objects. Anyhow, I didn't.

I had two Hertford men to write for me, who took turns, one coming in the mornings and the other in the afternoons. Bright, the Master of University, was Chairman of the Examiners, and I remember him coming up to one of my amanuenses and asking him for what school he was reading. My friend said he was a mathematician. 'Oh, well, *you* won't know anything about history,' said Bright.

There were six weeks between the end of the examination and my viva, in which I might have made good some of my deficiencies as regards early constitutional history; instead, I spent the time reading Economics. I was vivaed by G. W. Prothero, who confined his questions entirely to Stubbs's *Charters*, asking me to translate various passages. Here I made a very bad show. After this I was honestly surprised at obtaining a Second. I wrote to Johnson, expressing my surprise and delight, and thanking him for all he had done for me. To this he replied very characteristically: 'You ought to have got a First, but you didn't get enough down. I only did my duty by you.' There were only three men in the First Class of my

year—W. S. Holdsworth,¹ H. L. Samuel,² and C. Grant Robertson.³

My social life at Oxford was, on the whole, less satisfactory to me than my life as a student. I knew hardly any one when I first went up. I was two years older than the ordinary freshman. I was exceedingly shy and *gauche*, and very sensitive about my defective sight ; in fact, I was much too self-conscious about it. I would not ask men to come for walks with me for fear that they might dislike the trouble of guiding me, if or when necessary, and for fear that I might be keeping them from something they liked better. I hated the feeling that people were doing things for me out of kindness. As an undergraduate I would rarely take the first step towards making a friend, and all through my life my shyness and sensitiveness have no doubt often made others shy and awkward with me and diffident about trying to get to know me.

What were then the new buildings at Hertford were not quite finished when I went up, and I had to go into lodgings for my first term. The front of the college, the hall, and the new rooms on the north side of the quadrangle were all new in 1889. In my second term I moved into new rooms on the ground floor of this north side, where I lived for the rest of my four years, the college authorities kindly allowing me to remain in the college during my fourth year.

I was very lonely in my lodgings at 45 The Broad in my first term. Jim Cornish came in for an hour in the evenings three times a week and worked with me, but the other evenings I spent nearly always quite alone, smoking and playing my violin. Only one of the boys—Percy Burley—who was with me at Childrey came up in my year, but there were one or two others in their third or fourth years of whom I saw something. Burley, who had been with me for three years at Childrey, was the owner of the tricycle on which we used to tear about the country. I saw a great deal of him at Oxford, and in fact until he went down at the end of his third year he was my chief companion. He was at Lincoln, and I came

¹ Sir William Holdsworth, Vinerian Professor of Law.

² Sir Herbert Samuel, G.C.B., G.B.E.

³ Sir Charles Grant Robertson, C.V.O., Principal of Birmingham University.

to know several of his friends, though none of them intimately. He and I spent much of our time together, either in his rooms or mine, and he was extremely good in reading aloud to me. We used to go for long walks and did a good deal of double-scutting on the river. At one time we took to a double Rob Roy canoe, an amusement which nearly led to disaster. We were coming upstream, and while going through Iffley lock the end of the canoe caught in one of the chains hanging down the wall, and overturned. Fortunately we could both swim, and we climbed up by means of a ladder hurriedly produced by the terrified lock-keeper. Burley came once or twice to stay with me at Higham in vacations, and in the Long Vacation of 1891 we went for a walking tour in the Lake District. In fact, his friendship very much added to the happiness of my first three years at Oxford. On going down he took Orders and our paths in life gradually diverged.

Of Jim Cornish I also saw a good deal, and he did all he could to break down my shyness and make me more sociable. But for him I doubt if I should ever have come to know any of the men of my year at Hertford. During my first term I certainly hardly spoke to any of them. Things were easier when I moved into college, though even then I spent a great deal of time alone, often sitting in my room all the afternoon longing to be out of doors, but being too sensitive to ask any one to come for a walk with me. However, as time went on I became on friendly terms with nearly every one, and intimate with some.

My greatest friend at Hertford was undoubtedly H. R. Pyatt. He left Harrow as head of the school, and came up as senior scholar of his year. He was a very brilliant person, and obtained two Firsts with ease. He could, I believe, have won some university prizes had he taken the trouble to go in for them, but he was remarkably versatile and disliked the idea of tying himself down to pure scholarship. As a young man Pyatt was of a roving and restless disposition, and somewhat Bohemian in his tastes. He was delightfully unconventional. I remember him in later years arriving at our house in London for a visit, but having lost his top-hat, he apologized and said : ' It doesn't matter ; I have got a cap,' and went about quite

cheerfully in London clothes surmounted by the tweed cap ! He often told me that he would like to lead the life of a tramp and wander about writing poetry when he felt inclined. And he really meant it. However, the fates were against him, and he has for the last thirty years and more been a master at Fettes College, Edinburgh.

Another man with whom I was very intimate was Seymour Rendall. He belonged to a well-known family of scholars and schoolmasters, and had rooms opposite mine in college. For about a year he, Pyatt and I breakfasted together alternately in each other's rooms. Pyatt did not always join us when the breakfast was in his room, preferring to converse with us from his bed in the adjoining room in the intervals of eating sardines out of a tin and writing Latin verses !

I had two more companions in my last two years, for in 1891 my brother came up from Harrow to Merton, and in 1892 A. J. Brewster to University. Brewster was the elder son of the rector of Stratford St. Mary, a village adjoining Higham, and he afterwards married my sister Julia.

I worked so hard while I was at Hertford that I really had not much time for anything outside my work, and so failed to obtain much of the best that Oxford has to give. I now realize that what undergraduates learn by intercourse with one another, from discussion and debating societies, is often quite as valuable as what they learn from their tutors. And the knowledge of life they gain is often more important than the knowledge of books they acquire. I learned something of books, but little of life. We had a good debating society at Hertford with a membership limited to thirty, known as the ' Tyndale Society ', and of this I was elected a member. But I was very nervous, and so spoke rarely, and then badly, in a halting style. I had not the nerve to make use of the opportunity of learning to speak. I joined the Musical Union in my first two years and the Musical Club in my third and fourth, and of this I have remained a member ever since. I went to the weekly concerts of the club whenever I could—generally with my brother, who was very fond of music—and heard a considerable amount of first-rate chamber music. I practised my violin pretty steadily during these years, but did not have any lessons. There

happened to be a dearth of musical men at Hertford in my time, and I can remember only two of them who could play my accompaniments.

My undergraduate years form a very happy part of my life. I could no doubt have made much more of my time at Oxford than I did, but it is easy to say that now with a lifetime of experience behind one. The contact with other men of about my own age helped to develop my mind, and by the time I came down I knew something of the problems of the universe, that is to say, I knew something of the existence of problems where I had thought all was plain sailing. I had, for example, for the first time heard freely discussed religious questions which I had thought did not admit of doubt, and other questions where I had doubted in secret by myself. I shall always be grateful to Oxford for what she did for me in those four years. She gave me Economics as an interest in life, she roused my curiosity about other subjects, and she taught me in some measure to think for myself.

V

CLIFTON

AFTER taking my schools in June 1893 I went home to Higham, and apart from a second trip abroad with my father and brother and one or two short visits, I stayed there until October. One of these visits was to my friend Hugo Mallet, who had been called to the Bar and who was practising as a conveyancing barrister in chambers at Bristol. I had always kept in touch with him ever since our time together at Debenham and Childrey. He occasionally stayed with us at Higham, I had been to see him when he was up at Cambridge, and he had stayed with me once or twice at Oxford. During my visit to him at Clifton, where he lived, we discussed my future, and he suggested that I should come and live with him at Clifton, go on with my reading, and possibly find some work in Bristol.

My father had no idea of my taking up any profession or doing any definite work at all. I discussed with him the possibility of going in for Extension lecturing, but he threw cold water on this idea at once, saying that he did not see how I could possibly lecture. The only thing he could suggest was that I should live at Higham. He was very fond of me and wanted to have me at home with him. I suppose he imagined that I should find enough to do in going about with him, helping him in the management of his cottages, going to garden-parties with my mother and sisters, and taking part in the little social functions of the neighbourhood. This would have been a very unsatisfactory sort of life for me, and would have given me no scope whatever. My father really had very little to do, and was quite incapable of delegating work even if there had been any which he could have handed over to me. I told him of Mallet's suggestion of my living at Clifton, and this he disliked very much at first. He was, I am afraid, greatly disappointed at my unwillingness to live

permanently at Higham. I was of course sorry for this, but I am sure it would never have done. Finally my father agreed that I should go to Clifton in the autumn for a visit of a month or so.

I lived at Clifton for more than eight years, but for long after I first went my father never would admit that I was living there. I used to hear him say to his friends at Higham : ' My son stays a good deal with a friend at Clifton.' This was rather distressing to me, as it was constantly bringing home how disappointed he was that I would not live at Higham. However, all through these years I did spend some time at home, often two or three months on end in the summer.

The trip abroad was to Holland, where we visited The Hague, Amsterdam, Haarlem, and Leyden. We again did a great deal of sightseeing, but on the whole I enjoyed the experience very much, especially as my old tutor, Mr. Cooper, with his wife and daughters, were at The Hague when we were there. In October I went to Clifton with Steele for my month's visit, and took rooms in the same house as Mallet at 20 Sion Hill, a visit which I am afraid extended itself to Christmas, and by the end of that time I had decided to live permanently at Clifton. Soon after going there I was asked to join the committee of the Bristol Charity Organisation Society. My father was pleased at this, as he had worked for many years for the C.O.S. in London, as I have already mentioned, and the prospect of this work did much to reconcile him to my living at Clifton. I attended the meetings of the committee all the time I was at Clifton, and took a fairly active share in its work. I also occasionally visited cases for the committee, but this I particularly disliked, always feeling that I was guilty of unwarrantable prying into the affairs of other people.

The C.O.S. in its early days undoubtedly did very valuable work by calling the attention of the public to the fact that poverty cannot be remedied by indiscriminate charity and almsgiving. It taught that charity must be organized, and that the wealth available for the relief of poverty must be distributed in such a way as to bring about the maxi-

mum of good. The methods of the Society were exceedingly thorough and carefully devised, but there was a certain hardness and rigidity about them which made them very unattractive and which earned for the Society a good deal of unpopularity. In order to avoid the misuse of charity, very elaborate and often offensive inquiries had to be made into the past careers of applicants, and there was a tendency to lay stress on the finding of reasons why relief should *not* be given. The Society in fact became so much afraid of doing harm by giving relief that it often refrained from giving it when it would have done good. It is true that the C.O.S. aimed at relieving poverty, or rather at helping those to relieve it who were responsible for the administration of charities. But it paid comparatively little attention to the removal of the causes of poverty, and it never seems to have entered the heads of many hardworking C.O.S. people that poverty can be removed altogether, and that in a well-ordered community it would not exist. It may of course be said that the removal of the causes of poverty lay outside the immediate work of the Society.

There were one or two members of the Bristol Committee who were Socialists, or who at any rate had Socialistic leanings, and they took a different view of the Society's functions from that of their colleagues, but they were of course always in the minority. I regret now very much that I was not with them, but I at that time was a 'good C.O.S. man', and held very different views with regard to the Society from those I have just expressed.

While working on this committee, however, I certainly learned much which has been useful to me in after life: I learned something for the first time of administrative work and of the value of orderly methods. A few months in a good C.O.S. office still provide about the best training that a young man or woman who intends to take up social work can possibly have, and many social training centres now wisely use the C.O.S. for this purpose.

At that time it was said to be a well-known fact that the cities and towns which were most largely endowed with charities contained the largest number of poor people. The poor were

said to flock into the towns which had the most to give in charity, with the result that they competed for the spoils, which gradually became so widely distributed that the share obtained by each recipient was so small as to be practically useless. I was almost immediately set on to the task of making as complete a list as possible of all the Bristol charities, with notes stating their objects and powers, and the amount at their disposal. The information was not easy to obtain, and the work took me some months. Ultimately the lists were written out on cards and hung up on the walls of the office. In the first year that I was on the committee I remember being very much pleased at being asked to write the annual report, the secretary being absent through illness. My report seems to have been regarded as satisfactory, for I was generally asked to help in its production in subsequent years.

I did a great deal of reading during these years at Clifton. I read all the morning with Steele, generally for an hour or two in the afternoon, and Mallet often read to me in the evenings. My main subject was of course Economics. Economics is a very good subject for a blind man. The literature was considerable when I began, and it is now becoming vast. But it is by no means necessary to read everything, and certainly not all the current literature. Extensive and detailed reading is not in fact so necessary as it is in some other subjects. The historian, for instance, must be familiar with an enormous mass of material before he can be an authority on any period. The economist of course should know well the principal writers, and keep in touch as far as possible with new developments in theory. But, for him, the power of observing carefully the ordinary occurrences of everyday life and of thinking and reflecting upon them is really quite as important as reading. The man, for example, who knows and understands thoroughly what is going on around him in the town or village in which he lives, and can form reasoned judgments with regard to it is by way of being quite as good an economist as many who have a much wider arm-chair knowledge of books. There is no reason why a blind man should not be able to think and observe as well as a man who can see. I wish more blind men would take up Economics.

Mallet was much interested in Economics. His father, Sir Louis Mallet, had been a great friend of Richard Cobden's, and Hugo had been brought up in the strict tenets of the Manchester School. My bias at Oxford had been in that direction, and Mallet did much to confirm me in the individualistic principles I had then formed. I was a convinced Free Trader, and believed in the freedom of exchange generally, thinking that if competition could only be free and unfettered all would be well. I was much impressed at that time by Bastiat's *Economic Harmonies*, a brilliant piece of deductive reasoning, and convincing if the premises are accepted. I seem always to have assumed that competition was very much freer than is really the case, and I did not realize until much later that competition never could be free so long as the land and capital of the country were owned and controlled by a small section of the population.

The bimetallic controversy occupied much of our thoughts, and I wrote a few letters on the subject to one of the Bristol newspapers. I still believe that the theory of bimetallism was correct, and that but for the discovery of the Klondike mines and the new developments with regard to the production of gold in South Africa about 1896 some change in the direction of bimetallism would have been inevitable. The bimetallic standard of course involved the settlement of a ratio between gold and silver by international agreement, and I realize now that an international agreement on such a subject would have been very much more difficult than I imagined in my youthful optimism.

I read a great deal of general economics, and at the same time made a rather special study of money. I made an elaborate analysis of both Marshall's and Nicholson's *Principles*, and how I wished that Marshall could have written in the style of Nicholson and that Nicholson could have had Marshall's grasp of the subject ! I also read a great deal besides Economics—English History, Roman History, Greek History, together with a certain amount of Political Science, Philosophy and Theology, and a great many novels. In fact, my reading was somewhat indiscriminate. I often set myself tasks which were burdensome and turned out to be of not much permanent value. For instance, I read through the whole of Carlyle's

Frederick the Great—a colossal work which I believe few professional historians now think of reading. During the summer of 1894, which I spent at Higham, I wrote a long essay on bimetallism for a prize which had been offered by Sir Henry Meysey-Thompson, afterwards Lord Knaresborough. I did not get the prize. A year or two later I sent an article on some point connected with bimetallism to *The Economic Journal*, which was quite rightly rejected. And this was the extent of my literary activities during these years, with the exception of an occasional letter to the Bristol papers on economic questions—generally consisting of attacks on Socialism.

Mallet, as I have already mentioned, was a good musician, and he took an active part in promoting an interest in music in Bristol and in organizing and arranging concerts. Napier Miles, of King's Weston, was one of our friends. He was a well-known and distinguished amateur, and had already begun the good work he has since done for music in Bristol. We were fortunate in having for two or three years Dr. Percy Buck as organist of the cathedral and E. F. Fellowes as precentor. Buck afterwards went on to Harrow, and Fellowes became a minor canon of Windsor, and is now well known as a high authority on music, and especially as the editor of *The English Madrigal School*. We saw much of them both, and as Fellowes was a first-rate amateur violinist and Buck a fine pianist we had a great deal of good music at the little house in the Paragon into which we moved in 1896. I worked hard at my violin, and had some fairly good lessons, occasionally having the pleasure of playing with Buck. I learned the second fiddle part of one or two of Haydn's quartets, and sometimes played with an amateur quartet. There are few things more delightful than taking part in chamber music, and I wish I could have done more of this, but the learning of a part was not an easy matter for me.

About the year 1898 I had a romantic experience in connexion with music. Some of us who were keen on music had noticed an extraordinarily clever harpist who played in the streets of Bristol, and who was sometimes accompanied by a little girl who played the violin surprisingly well. The

harpist was really wonderful ; amongst other things he used to play the Moonlight Sonata. One day he applied to the C.O.S. for help for his family, and the C.O.S. took up the case. I thought the little girl had the makings of a first-rate fiddler and a good musician, and Mallet and I got a few of our friends together to hear her play. She was then about fifteen, and she gave us—on a guinea violin—as good a rendering of Mendelssohn's violin concerto as I have ever heard. Money was raised and she was sent to the Royal College of Music, and afterwards to Vienna, where she studied under the most famous masters of that day. When she came back to England she took London by storm. The little girl was Marie Hall.

Almost immediately on my arrival at Clifton I made friends with Mr. and Mrs. Noble Pope and their family. They were already intimate friends of Mallet's, and we both soon became almost sons of the house. It was there that I first met Miss Nicholl, Mrs. Pope's niece, who afterwards became my wife. Mr. and Mrs. Pope were wonderfully kind to me, and I owe to their friendship much of the happiness, both of my time at Clifton and in fact of all the rest of my life. It was at their suggestion that I made my first experiment in teaching. They had a son who was then at Harrow, and one little girl who was educated by a governess at home. She was eight years old when I went to Clifton, and when she was about eleven I began to teach her English history. Later on I gave her a short course in elementary Economics—a very unusual study for a girl of thirteen in those days. But both our boys' and girls' schools would do well to introduce their pupils to Economics at a much earlier age than is now the case, for if properly presented the subject can be made quite attractive to children of fourteen. Economics is of course more frequently taught in our schools than formerly, but there is room for still wider recognition of its importance. Later on Molly went to school, and I had the satisfaction of hearing that Churton Collins, the history lecturer, considered her to be the best-taught history pupil he had ever had—a verdict which was, however, I am sure, the result much more of her brilliance than of my teaching ! I was often very lonely at Clifton ;

Mallet and my other men friends were at work all day in Bristol, and I spent a great deal of time alone with Steele. But during the last few years of my stay Molly was constantly with me. The companionship of this clever, merry, and affectionate little girl was, I am sure, very good for me. She kept me from becoming too serious and bookish, and her friendship was a great delight to me.

I spent a week or two nearly every summer with the Popes at Gidleigh Park, near Chagford, a house on Dartmoor which they took for the holidays. They were a large, cheerful family party, Mrs. Pope being one of a family of twelve, and the house was always full of her brothers and sisters and nephews and nieces. We had great times wandering about the moor, most of the party on Dartmoor ponies. I myself did a little riding at first, but gave it up after my pony had rushed recklessly under the branches of a low-hanging tree. I only just escaped the fate of Absalom by my baldness and by my being swept from my saddle. One of Mrs. Pope's sisters had married Henry Vansittart Neale, the son of Edward Vansittart Neale, the well-known Christian Socialist and co-operator. I often stayed with them at Bisham Abbey, and I made some delightful expeditions with them down the river from Oxford to Bisham. On one occasion three of us double-sculled, taking turns, from Oxford to Shillingford, and the next day from Shillingford to Bisham—over thirty miles, a pretty good day's work, especially with two sitters besides the odd man out. Another time we started from Oxford and went down as far as Windsor ; this was a three days' trip.

It was at the Popes' house that I first met Alfred Ainger, the well-known authority on Charles Lamb. He was at that time Master of the Temple and a canon of Bristol, and I saw a good deal of him during the years I was at Clifton. He read aloud most beautifully, and was fond of reading at little parties, surrounded by admiring ladies. I often heard him read passages from Dickens, and it certainly was a wonderful experience. He had a great appreciation of music, though somewhat conservative in his taste. What he would have said about some of the music of the present day I do not know, for even in the 'nineties one of his favourite remarks was : ' Music hath charms

except when it's Brahms ! ' His was a most charming personality, and he had a quaint, whimsical humour. The Dean of Bristol had a serious quarrel with the wife of one of the canons, and it developed to such a pitch that it became impossible for them to take the Communion together. However, one day the Dean told Ainger that the disagreement had been settled, and that he had decided to bury the hatchet. A friend of Ainger's, while walking home with him from the cathedral, heard him murmuring to himself :

' Buried hatchet futile, very,
Better Mrs. R. to bury.'

The W. W. Wards were another Bristol family with whom I became very intimate. Ward was some years older than myself. He had been at Magdalen, and had taken a First in Mods and a Second in Greats. He had kept up his scholarship, and was still much interested in philosophy. He had a great knowledge of Aristotle and Plato, but his contempt for current philosophy and modern thought was unbounded ! When he heard of any modern theory he was always sure to say—or at any rate imply—either that it was worthless because it had not been discussed by Aristotle and Plato, or that it had been discussed much better by them. He was a most stimulating companion, an excellent talker, and one of the most humorous men I have ever known. He built himself a house on the Helford River near Falmouth, to which his wife and children removed during my last two years at Clifton, and he lived with us during that time, going down to Falmouth for the week-ends. I occasionally went with him, and for many years to come I stayed with him and his family on the Helford River once, and often twice, a year.

Ward was a very keen yachtsman, and when I was with him in Cornwall we spent most of our time sailing about in a Falmouth quay-punt and fishing. In 1901 we hired a small yacht together for a month. He was very busy at the time and the task of selecting the yacht fell on me, though I knew nothing whatever about it. I went down with Steele to Southampton, where I spent several days interviewing agents and inspecting

yachts. Finally I hired a nineteen-ton yawl-rigged boat, with a skipper and a boy—and it turned out a great success. When the transaction was completed Steele and I victualled her and spent the night on board. We were joined the next day by Ward and his son Frank, then a boy at Eton, and sailed all through the night down to the Helford River. We left Southampton at ten o'clock in the morning and reached the Helford River at one o'clock the next afternoon. We anchored just off Ward's house and made various expeditions from there, and I was so bitten with the life of the sea that I lived on board, declining even to sleep in the house. With one exception the yacht was a great success, and I have ever since longed to be the owner of a boat. However, this has so far been my only experience as a yachtsman. One of our cruises from the Helford River took us to the Dartmouth Regatta. This I had planned mainly in the belief that Miss Nicholl was staying with the Popes at their house on Dartmoor, and Ward and I invited the whole Gidleigh party to come down to Dartmouth and lunch on board the yacht. We prepared a most elaborate lunch and the party arrived—Mr. and Mrs. Pope and Molly, uncles and aunts, cousins and friends, but no Miss Nicholl: who was not coming till the following week! However, I managed to wangle an invitation from Mrs. Pope to join the Gidleigh party at the right time, so the day was not entirely wasted.

I went abroad two or three times during these years. In the spring of 1894 I spent a month with Pyatt in Berlin. He was learning German with a view to studying German works on Roman history. We lived with a German family and had a most amusing time. While I was there I remember hearing the following point of view expressed more than once: 'We are bound to have a war before long in order to give the army something to do and to justify the expenditure upon it; and, apart from this, the Kaiser will probably go in for a war in order to keep the Socialists quiet and to divert attention from social reform.' This strikes me now as interesting in the light of what happened twenty years later. At my mother's suggestion I consulted a German oculist in Berlin—I forget his name—and the advice he gave was the exact reverse of that given

me by the other oculists to whom I had been. He advised me to use my eyes as little as possible ; in fact, he told me that it would be a good thing to sit in the dark for a few hours every day. This gloomy suggestion I rejected, but I gave up trying to read, and gradually ceased to write my own letters.

In 1895 my family decided to go out to Australia to visit my mother's sister and her husband, who was then Bishop of Bathurst, New South Wales. My father was particularly anxious that I should go, but I did not want to interrupt my work and life at Clifton, and did not care about the idea of going *en famille*. I had nothing in common with my uncle in Australia, and rather shied at the amount of sightseeing that would be involved. So I decided to stay at home. My father was, I am afraid, very much disappointed, but things were made a little easier by an arrangement under which I was to go out to Naples with a friend and meet my family on their way back. In April 1896 I set out with Cuthbert Jones-Mortimer, who lived with Mallet and myself for a time at Clifton, and we spent a few days in Paris, Genoa, and Naples, where we joined the ship. I very much enjoyed the voyage home, and it gave me a taste for sea-voyages which I have to some extent been able to gratify in later years.

In 1897 I spent a very enjoyable week in Paris with Mallet, the Popes, and the Wards, and in 1900 I went to America for the first time. My mother died early in 1899, and my father, who, as far as I know, had never thought of going back to America during her lifetime, became very anxious to revisit scenes which he connected with her, and to introduce me and my sister Julia to some of her relations. We were there only six weeks, but we saw New York and Boston, and something of life in an old New England house in Connecticut, where we stayed with an aunt. We went the usual tour to Niagara, across Lake Ontario, down the St. Lawrence by boat to Montreal and Quebec, and back by Lake Champlain and Lake George. I met several new cousins, and amongst them my first-cousin William Samuel Johnson, with whom I at once found I had much in common. He was a real student and man of letters. He has since published two novels and a little book containing some very beautiful poems which deserve to

be more widely known. Until I went to America for a long visit in 1927-8 I saw him very occasionally, and we corresponded only at long intervals, but nevertheless I became so intimate with him during the short time I spent in America with my father that I have always regarded him as one of my dearest friends.

When I look back on my life at Clifton I cannot help feeling that the years I spent there were to a large extent wasted. At the end of this period I was over thirty, and was gradually becoming a dilettante—a rather idle and fairly well-to-do bachelor. I often thought I was very busy when I was really doing very little. I had no real object in life. My reading was not directed to any definite purpose beyond the acquiring of knowledge. I was bookish, critical, and reserved, and without enthusiasms. I had little real social sense, and took only an academic interest in politics. There is, however, fortunately another side to the picture. I did a great amount of reading of a kind which I should never have had time afterwards to get through, and this has stood me in good stead. It no doubt helped to prepare me in a large measure for work which I afterwards undertook. I gained some experience of teaching, though not very much, and I made some good friends. But, more important than all this, it was to my living at Clifton that I owe my marriage.

The description I have given of myself at this time is to the best of my judgment accurate, and it certainly does not present me as particularly attractive. However, at the end of 1901 I became engaged to Mrs. Pope's niece Averil Nicholl, only daughter of H. F. Nicholl, of Bear Place, Twyford, Berkshire. She had been in the habit of paying long visits to her aunt, Mrs. Pope, almost every year, and I had also in recent years paid several delightful visits to her home. We first made friends over the violin; she was a good musician and a beautiful accompanist, and we spent much time playing together. I left Clifton soon after my engagement, and we were married in January 1902.

VI

LONDON, AND OXFORD AGAIN

WE set out on a most luxurious honeymoon, accompanied by Steele and a maid. My father had given us a very generous present, which was to be spent on our wedding tour. We went first to Costabelle on the Riviera, where we spent some weeks. We had by that time, however, become a little tired of our grandeur, so, escaping from our man and maid (whom we sent on to Cannes) we set out to walk from Costabelle to Cannes. The Riviera was even in those days fairly overrun by the 'idle rich', but some places which are now fashionable were then primitive and unspoiled. When we got to St. Tropez we created quite a sensation, for very few English people seem to have stayed at the hotel. Some of the inhabitants came to look in through the windows at us, and when we asked for a bath we were asking for the impossible. We went on from Cannes to Mentone, where we settled down for the next two months. Mentone has grown enormously since those days. There was then hardly a house between it and Cap Martin; in fact, we were told that it was not safe to walk along so lonely a road at night-time. We made many expeditions up into the mountains behind Mentone, riding on donkeys, and we heard a good deal of music both at Mentone and at Monte Carlo. The Casino never appealed to either of us. From Mentone we went on to Milan, and then to Lucerne, from Lucerne—after three weeks—to Mainz, and then down the Rhine to Cologne, ending our four months' tour with a fortnight in Paris. While we were at Mainz we went to see the great Wiesbaden oculist, Pardenstucker. He wanted me to have an operation, but he was not very sanguine about its results, and I decided against it.

Before my marriage, as I have said, I was shy and reserved, knowing little of society or of social functions. My wife, however, was fond of society; she had numerous cousins of about

her own age and a large circle of friends and acquaintances. Her home, Bear Place, near Wargrave, was generally full of young people, and there were constantly large week-end parties. I was thus thrown into an entirely new atmosphere, of a kind to which I had hitherto been almost a stranger, meeting for the first time numbers of gay, irresponsible young people who were occupied in having a good time. I had seen scarcely anything of this side of life, and the change was undoubtedly good for me, for at Clifton I had lived far too much the life of a recluse. I was wonderfully well received by my new young friends, and threw myself into their amusements with considerable zest. I went for the first time to Lord's, when my brother-in-law, K. I. Nicholl, was captain of the Eton XI. My wife and I went up to Oxford in 1902 to chaperone a party arranged by my other brother-in-law, C. R. I. Nicholl, who was then at Magdalen, for some Commem. balls. Both of these were activities entirely new to me, Commem. balls being a side of Oxford life with which I was quite unfamiliar and in which I had never contemplated taking part!

In the course of the summer I consulted Dr. Doyne of Oxford about my eyes, and he recommended an operation for conical cornea, thinking that if he could reduce the cornea to the correct curve he might improve my vision. I had two operations on my right eye, therefore—one in this and one in the following year—and with the aid of glasses my sight was slightly improved. It became rather easier for me to get about, though the improvement did not enable me to read. I had a third operation of the same kind on my left eye in 1907, but this did not lead to much improvement. Doyne was a most delightful, amusing, and original man. He was very well known in Oxford, and will still be remembered by many who received, as I did, his parting present when he left to live in London. One day a man was discovered going round Oxford with a large handcart filled with teapots, and he was seen to leave a teapot at house after house on his way. On the teapot appeared a likeness of Doyne and his wife, and the inscription 'Should old acquaintance be forgot. Oxford 1885-1909. P. P. C.' I have mine still.

In November 1902 we took a house in Tite Street, Chelsea,

and settled down in London. For the next two years we led a fairly luxurious and rather frivolous, though quite enjoyable, life. We went to a great many dinner-parties, luncheon-parties, etc. We saw numerous plays, heard much good music, and we constantly went away for week-end visits to friends in the country. One of the advantages I gained from this sort of life was that I lost much of my shyness and became less reserved and awkward. I, however, by no means abandoned all idea of work. I still read a good deal of Economics, and tried to keep myself up to date in the literature of the subject. In 1894 I had become a member of the British Economic Association (later the Royal Economic Society), and was a regular reader of the *Economic Journal*. For some months I did work for an uncle of my wife's, who was secretary to the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration, and visited with him some of the Jewish tailors' home-work establishments in Whitechapel. In 1903 Joseph Chamberlain startled the world by launching his scheme of tariff reform, and I plunged at once into the fray. I even had a controversy in *The Times* with W. A. S. Hewins, who wrote under the pseudonym of 'Tariff Reformer', and I contributed several letters to *The Standard*. I also wrote some pamphlets in dialogue form for the Free Food League, but these were not published; I fancy they were somewhat too academic in style. The effect of the Tariff Reform controversy was to arouse in me for the first time a real interest in party politics. My wife also took up the Free Trade cause from the first, and was quite as keen as I was. Very much to the disgust of my father and of my wife's family, who were all strong Conservatives and ardent Tariff Reformers, in the 1906 general election I gave to the Liberal candidate for Chelsea the first political vote I had ever given. But we were not yet out-and-out Liberals, being doubtful about Irish Home Rule.

A few months after our wedding Mallet had married Miss Elsie Fry, the eldest daughter of the Right Hon. Lewis Fry, of Goldney House, Clifton, and in these years we paid occasional visits to them, as well as to the Popes, in Clifton. We also always had a week or two in the summer with the Wards, when we spent nearly all the time on the water. But by the end of 1904 we were becoming restless, and perhaps a little tired of our

life in London. We had had a very happy time there, but we were beginning to realize that we wanted a more definite object in life, and I certainly badly needed some regular work. As early as the summer of 1904 we had some idea of going to live in the country near Oxford, with a view to my finding work in the university. We looked at one or two houses in the neighbourhood, including a house at Ascott-under-Wychwood, a village of which I shall have more to say. But this idea was abandoned for the moment, and at the beginning of 1905 we let our house in Tite Street and wandered about for the next nine months.

On our wanderings we took with us a member of our household who is so much a part of our life that no account of it would be complete which did not mention her. Hunter (or 'Huntie', as she is always called) came as nurse to the Nicholl family when my wife was three weeks old. She had rather peculiar, but possibly sound, ideas about education. She never punished the Nicholl children severely for naughtiness. 'All healthy children are naughty,' she said. Stupidity, however, she would not tolerate, and an extremely stupid action always led to early bed and the administering of a particularly obnoxious powder in raspberry jam. My wife to this day shies at raspberry jam! Shortly after our return from our honeymoon 'Huntie' came to live with us in Tite Street, and has been with us ever since. She had left the Nicholls when my wife was eighteen, and Mrs. Pope had persuaded her to come to the Paragon and housekeep for Hugo Mallet and myself. She looked after us there for two years, so I was no stranger to her, and she at once adopted me as a sort of joint protector with herself of all that concerned my wife, though to this day she usually treats us both as if we were irresponsible children, often scolding us roundly, but allowing no criticism to be passed on us by any one but herself. She is a woman of rather unusual personality, with a strain of Hungarian gipsy blood in her veins—excitable and rather fiery, with an immense capacity for devotion, and with an extraordinarily keen sense of humour. Her rather caustic tongue and her very ready wit make her a most amusing companion, and our various friends and relations always appear to find 'Huntie' one of the chief attractions of

our household. She entirely declines to grow old, and, though she is now over eighty, her step is as elastic as a young woman's, her eyesight as keen, and her mind as alert as ever. The only perceptible sign of age is that she is slightly deaf, but even this she will not acknowledge, and any raising of one's voice when speaking to her brings the indignant protest : ' You needn't shout at me ; I ain't deaf ! ' She was a welcome guest in the houses where we stayed, and became very fond of Higham, in which quiet place she was a great success, making friends with all the villagers and being looked upon as the first authority on clothes, books, manners, and society in general.

We began our wanderings by staying some time at Higham, where my father was now alone with my eldest sister and a cousin who lived with them. My sister Julia had in the autumn of 1904 married Arthur Brewster, who had just been appointed chaplain to the Bishop of Gloucester. We were also of course a good deal at Wargrave, and we paid one or two other visits, finally settling down in Clifton for two or three months in the house in the Paragon where Mallet and I had formerly lived. We were very happy, and our friends in Clifton put great pressure upon us to settle down there altogether. We had almost completed arrangements for taking a house, when we went to stay with the Wards. We discussed our future with them, and Ward urged us strongly against settling in Clifton, and advised me to go up to Oxford, where he thought I might be able to find suitable work. I have always been very grateful to him for this advice, which we took.

When we were looking for houses in the country near Oxford in 1904 I had been to see F. Y. Edgeworth, Professor of Political Economy at Oxford. He was connected with my family by marriage, his sister having married a first-cousin of my mother's. My object in seeing him was to ask him whether he could give me any reviewing to do for the *Economic Journal*, of which he was editor. He was always extremely helpful and encouraging to young men, and in fact I am afraid he sometimes overpraised their work and overrated their abilities. But there must be many economists who, like myself, owe him a deep debt of gratitude for the encouragement they received from him in their early days. He asked me on this occasion if I could read

French, and I had to confess I could not, but my wife, who was with me and who is a good French scholar, said she could read and translate French books to me, whereupon Edgeworth said he had only that morning received a letter containing one or two sentences in French which he could not quite translate ; would my wife help him by seeing if she could make anything of them ? He handed her the letter, and to her surprise she found that the meaning of the sentences in question was perfectly obvious. He expressed the greatest gratitude, and thanked her warmly. It was not until afterwards that we discovered that Edgeworth was a most accomplished linguist, knowing French and three or four other modern languages almost perfectly ! He gave me two English books to review, and I have reviewed for the *Journal* ever since.

After our stay in Clifton we had a six weeks' trip in the Pyrenees (which I occupied in growing a short pointed beard !), and then a long visit to the Wards, spent as usual principally in sailing. We had become so fond of the Helford River that my father bought us a small cottage near the Wards' house, where we intended to spend holidays. As a matter of fact, we went there only in the Easter and Long Vacations of 1906. After that my work in Oxford made it impossible for me to spend enough time at the cottage to make it worth while, and with great regret we sold it in 1907. In October 1905 we went up to Oxford, having taken 17 Merton Street furnished for four months—one of the quaint old Merton Street houses full of steps and up and down hill floors. In the following January we moved to 20 Merton Street, then almost a new house, and this became our home for the next five years.

We knew hardly anybody in Oxford except the Arthur Johnsons, H. F. Pelham (the President of Trinity) and his family, the Ansons of All Souls, Edgeworth, and some of the Hertford dons. But through their kindness we soon enlarged our circle. Claude Blagden ¹ of Christ Church lived a few doors from us in Merton Street, and we soon became very intimate with him and his family. Mrs. Blagden (Daisy Hassall) almost at once became one of my wife's greatest friends. One of our neighbours at Tite Street had been H. E. Egerton, afterwards

¹ Afterwards Bishop of Peterborough.

the first Beit Professor of Colonial History at Oxford. He told me one day of the foundation of the new Chair, and I strongly advised him to go in for it. He laughed at the idea at first, being always very diffident as to his own powers. However, I persuaded him, and he was elected to the professorship. Early in 1906 he came up to Oxford and settled in 14 St. Giles, and a very close friendship grew up between us and his family. We also knew a few undergraduates, including Ward's son Frank, through whom we came to know a number of particularly brilliant Balliol men of that time, most of whom unfortunately fell in the Great War. Of these Charles Lister and Patrick Shaw-Stewart stand out especially in my memory.

I consulted Edgeworth as to the possibility of my obtaining some teaching work, and he advised me to take the examination for the Diploma in Economics, an examination which had only been introduced in 1904. He thought that if I could obtain the Diploma I should be better qualified as a teacher and should have more chance of obtaining work. He introduced me to L. L. Price of Oriel, who took the same view. Economics in Oxford was in a bad way in those days, Edgeworth being the only official teacher of the subject. Price, who became the first Reader in Economic History in 1909, lectured on Economic History, and Edwin Cannan, who lived in Oxford though teaching at the London School of Economics, had begun to take occasional pupils for the Diploma. Economics at that time was a subject which almost anybody thought they could teach—at least, some of the historians and philosophers thought themselves quite competent; and perhaps they were, considering the small amount which was taught. Before the Diploma was introduced, there was a Pass Group in Political Economy which only required a knowledge of parts of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* and F. A. Walker's *Political Economy*. There was half a paper on Economic Theory in the History School, and generally one question in Greats. And that was all. Before 1905 I doubt whether Marshall was read at all in Oxford; he certainly was not taught.

I decided to go in for the Diploma, and from November 1905 to June 1906 found myself once more working for an examination. I was pleased to find that the reading I had done in past

years covered a great deal of the ground, and that my work had been on what in Oxford then was considered to be 'sound lines'. The examination at that time consisted of five papers—two on Economic Theory, one on Economic History, and two on Special Subjects. I took Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* as one of my special subjects, and Public Finance as the other; this last was almost entirely new to me. I went to some lectures by L. L. Price on Economic History, and part of the time took him a weekly essay. I also went to a seminar of Edgeworth's. Edgeworth, who was not a good lecturer, was often extremely interesting at these seminars. He had an enormous knowledge of the literature of Economics, and, in fact, of literature generally. He was full of out-of-the-way quotations and curious pieces of knowledge which one would not have easily come across by oneself.

In June 1906, therefore, at the age of thirty-seven, I was again in the Schools, and succeeded in obtaining the Diploma in Economics with Distinction. This was no great feat, I think, although I was complimented by the examiners on my work. There were only five candidates, and we all got Distinction! Perhaps the idea was to encourage people to go in for the Diploma, and the standard was extremely low. A year or two later the Diploma in Economics became the Diploma in Economics and Political Science, and in 1909 I became a member of the Committee for Economics which is responsible for the examination, and have been a member of this committee ever since. I have always used what little influence I possess in the direction of having the standard raised, and I am glad to say that it is now no easy matter to obtain Distinction. The work required for the examination takes quite a useful place in the Oxford curricula, and it has been the means of giving many young men a real and lasting interest in Economics.

In the Michaelmas Term of 1906 there was very little lecturing required for the Diploma, owing to the small number of candidates, but Edgeworth and Price advised me to prepare a course of lectures with a view to my becoming a lecturer in the following year, and they proposed the *Wealth of Nations* as a subject. So I set to work and prepared a most elaborate course of fourteen lectures. I wrote every lecture out in full two or

three times, and spent a great deal of time over them. The work came in useful in after years, as all through I compared Adam Smith's views with those of later writers. But with regard to their immediate purpose they can hardly be regarded as a success. At the beginning of the Michaelmas Term 1907 my name appeared in the *University Gazette* in the list of lecturers. I learned my first lecture by heart and set off in my cap and gown with my wife to Hertford, where I had been lent a lecture-room, and where I sat for some time in nervous expectation of the arrival of my audience. But nobody turned up, for, as it happened, nobody was taking the *Wealth of Nations* that year. This was really extremely fortunate for me, as by that time I had so much work to do in another direction that I could hardly have managed the Adam Smith lectures in addition without a very great strain.

I have always naturally been very dependent on my secretary, and most of the work I have been able to do could not have been done at all without the aid of a good reader and amanuensis. Steele had left me in 1903 to return to a business life, and between then and 1906 I had people to help who were in no way trained as secretaries ; but they did their best, and were able to give me most of the help I needed with the work I was then doing. During the first year after I came back to Oxford and while I was reading for the Diploma I had a man who acted as secretary-valet to me, and he made himself a very competent reader and amanuensis. Somehow or other I do not seem to have realized the importance of having a good secretary, and perhaps the work I was doing up to 1906 hardly made one necessary. In the autumn of that year, when I was beginning my Adam Smith lectures, W. Gribble came to me, and to his hard work and devotion I have ever since owed more than I can say. He soon became not merely a secretary, but a close friend.

In June 1907 the great Oxford Pageant took place, and in this my wife took a leading part, being responsible for one of the episodes. The pageant brought us into touch with many Oxford families, and our house was constantly full of young people, so that my time was by no means all spent over Adam Smith. We went abroad twice during this year, once with my

father to Paris to meet my American cousin Will Johnson and his family. His son was working at the Sorbonne, and my father, though then seventy-four, threw himself with great zest into the life of this young man and his friends. He insisted on giving an enormous dinner-party at one of the Paris restaurants, and enjoyed it as much as any of us. In September I joined my wife in Switzerland for a fortnight; she had been spending some weeks in Germany with some friends, while I had been staying with the Wards and the Mallets, who had recently bought a house on Exmoor. During this visit to Cornwall I very nearly ended my days on the Manacles, a well-known reef of rocks between the Helford River and the Lizard. A large party of us were in a quay punt, and Ward was reading aloud from Jane Austen's *Emma*. The boatman, who was afterwards discovered to be not a sailor but a soldier on leave, became so much interested that he was not sufficiently careful about navigating what is known as the Inner Passage, and to our horror we suddenly heard a grinding scrunch. The boatman completely lost his head, which was perhaps fortunate, as his yells of 'Jesus Christ!' were heard by a coastguardsman who was out in his boat some way off. He came up and took us on board, and we managed to float the quay punt off when she was thus lightened. It was rather a narrow shave, and we were a large party, including some children and an old lady with very bad heart-disease. However, she was much less upset than any of us. One day, when my wife was in Germany, she was very much depressed and quite miserable, being haunted with the idea that something disastrous had happened to me. It turned out to be the very day when I had gone aground on the Manacles. I mention this for the benefit of those who are interested in telepathy.

While in Switzerland we stayed at Grindelwald, and went for many long walks about the mountains. One day we actually had a walk on a glacier with a guide. I went ahead with the guide, and my wife was left to struggle along by herself. After a time, being in difficulties, she called out for help. But the guide, thinking she was anxious about me, merely turned round and said: 'It is all right, madame; Monsieur has the feet of an antelope!'

My father was now leading a rather lonely life at Higham, my elder sister May having died early in 1906. He was not entirely alone, as our cousin, who had lived with them for some years, stayed on to look after him. But we felt that we must be with him as much as we possibly could, and we always spent a considerable part of our vacations at Higham. In 1907 my brother married Miss Beatrice Walter—one of the Walter family so long associated with *The Times*—who lived at Bearwood, not far from my wife's people. They settled in the North near Sheffield, as Tom was at that time working at Sanderson Brothers & Newbould—work which he unfortunately had to abandon later on owing to ill-health. As the Brewsters were now permanently established at Gloucester the family was somewhat dispersed.

VII

RUSKIN COLLEGE : EARLY DAYS

SOME time in 1899, while I was at Clifton, I received a circular announcing that a college had been founded at Oxford for members of the working class by two Americans, Mr. and Mrs. Vrooman, and that certain members of the University, together with some Labour leaders, had given the new college their blessing. Amongst these were C. W. Bowerman, D. J. (afterwards Sir David) Shackleton, James Sexton, Ben Tillett, Professor York Powell, Sidney Ball, A. J. Carlyle, and Sir William Markby. The college was Ruskin College, first known as Ruskin Hall. Its objects were stated to be the provision of an education of a university standard for working-class students in a residential college, but it was expressly laid down that Latin and Greek, Theology and Philosophy, were not to be taught. The college was to stand for education and not for propaganda, and its aim was to be the fitting of its students for service amongst their fellow-workers rather than the improvement of their own material position. It was to give its students a fuller life by means of education, and to help them to think for themselves and to form reasoned judgments on the working-class problems with which they came in contact, as well as on the problems of life and society generally.

This circular interested me very much. I was keenly alive to the advantages I had received from a university education, and I felt it right that opportunities such as I had had should be made more available to working people. As things were at that time, only those working men who had been to a secondary school—and they were very few and far between—had the chance of going up to Oxford. For others it was quite out of the question, even if they could have afforded to do so, owing to the difficulties of the curriculum. But I knew that, without working for a degree, there was much that working men could learn at Oxford with advantage to themselves if it were properly

taught and if a high educational standard were maintained. I thought also that the environment of Oxford would on the whole be good for students coming from industrial centres, as it would be the means of showing them a new side of life and would bring them into contact—often for the first time in their lives—with beautiful surroundings. It was made plain that Ruskin Hall was to be a working-men's college in Oxford, and not part of the University. The circular naturally contained an appeal for funds, and I sent a small contribution. I afterwards learned that I was actually the first individual subscriber to the college.

I am afraid, however, Ruskin Hall soon dropped out of my mind, and in fact I do not think I heard anything more of it until I went back to Oxford in 1905. Soon after that time I met H. B. Lees-Smith,¹ who was then Vice-Principal of the College and Lecturer in Economics. We sometimes went for walks together and he talked about the college. Occasionally I went to his rooms there, and met one or two of the students. Lees-Smith had been one of my examiners for the Diploma, and, I believe, thought well of my work in the examination. Late one evening in June 1907 he turned up at our house, and told me that he wished me to come to Ruskin and take his place as Tutor and Lecturer in Economics. I naturally hesitated for some time, feeling totally unfitted for such a position ; but Lees-Smith insisted, urging that I must come. He pointed out that a tutor at Ruskin College must be much more than a tutor. He must throw himself heart and soul into the life of the place, and he told my wife that it would be no use my coming unless she too made the college her chief interest in life. He said he intended us to be the most permanent figures in the life of the college ! He waved every objection aside, and finally, with great misgivings, I yielded to his persuasions. Why he thought I was a suitable person for work at Ruskin I have never been able to discover. I had never given a lecture in my life, I had no experience whatever of teaching beyond the very small amount I had had with Molly Pope at Clifton years before, and I knew nothing of working-class problems apart from some very

¹ Afterwards Postmaster-General in the Labour Government of 1929.

abstract theories I had derived from books and my C.O.S. experiences at Clifton. I was almost completely ignorant of Trade Unionism or of the Co-operative Movement. I had read Economics entirely from what is rather absurdly, though conveniently, called the 'orthodox' point of view, I had never read a line of Marx, I knew very little of the Socialist writers, and those I had read had made no impression on my mind. I had hardly ever spoken to a working man except gardeners, coachmen, and gamekeepers.

With regard to the Socialist writers, I remember reading Blatchford's *Merrie England* when it first came out, but I was not at all impressed by it. In fact, I think it rather shocked and annoyed me. I can now, however, well understand its enormous success and its value as a piece of propaganda, and I am inclined to think that in some respects it is as good a short statement of the case against the existing industrial and social system as has ever been written. What knowledge I had of the Socialist writers generally was acquired from Rae's *Contemporary Socialism*—not a book calculated to influence a pronounced individualist, as I was, in the direction of Socialism. Broadly speaking, I was a middle-class man with the ordinary point of view of the middle-class Liberal of that time. But I was a student, and I had had for some years at the back of my mind the idea that the working people had as good a right as any one else to the best educational opportunities that were available. I had of late been feeling the need for regular work, and had been more and more realizing that I ought to contribute something to the common pot of effort if I were to justify my existence. My father was naturally rather staggered when I announced my project of going to Ruskin, but he had come to realize that I needed regular work, and regarded my having been asked to go as somewhat of a compliment. Most of my Conservative friends of course advised me strongly not to accept, but my father put no pressure on me, leaving me entirely free to make my own decision.

Up to 1903, when Tariff Reform made its appearance, I had lived almost entirely in a very Conservative atmosphere. My father and his friends were Conservatives, and as a boy and young man I do not think I ever even spoke to a Liberal—certainly

not to a Socialist. I doubt, however, if I ever really had the Conservative mind and the true Conservative outlook, for I remember when I was still a boy my father sometimes saying half-laughingly: 'I'm afraid Harry's a bit of a Radical.' I was not really very much interested in politics, but the Conservative and Primrose League meetings to which I was taken generally had the effect of making me think there must be something to be said for the other side. Mallet, who came from a Liberal family, had become a Liberal-Unionist by the time I went to Clifton, and we were both more interested in the economic than in the political side of Liberalism. Apart from the bimetallic controversy the 'nineties were rather a dull period as regards politics. Home Rule was after 1893 practically in abeyance, and there was nothing much in the programme of either party to stir the imagination of a young man who had no connexions with people actually taking part in politics.

During this time, however, my mind was probably tending towards Liberalism. I hated the Jameson Raid, and I was violently opposed to the Boer War, thinking that its objects were mainly in support of financial interests in England, and regarding the Boers as a courageous people fighting to maintain their freedom. But my opposition must have been half-hearted, for, as the war went on, I became anxious that it should end in favour of England. As I have already said, Tariff Reform gave me my first real interest in politics, and by the time I went to Ruskin College I was definitely a Liberal.

To all appearances my wife was almost as unfitted as myself to take part in the life of Ruskin College. She had been brought up in conventional surroundings and had been educated entirely by governesses at home. She certainly knew more about the lives of working people than I did, being intimate with many of the families in the village near which she lived. But these were in the main people who were working in some capacity or other for the owners of the large houses in the neighbourhood, and she knew nothing of the lives of the industrial workers and their problems. Her family were quite as Conservative as mine, and in some respects

keener on politics. But she always had in her a strain of rebellious criticism; I do not think she ever accepted the Conservative creed in its entirety, and by the time of which I am writing had abandoned it altogether. We were certainly a remarkable couple for the new life into which we were to be plunged.

The Governing Council of Ruskin College either agreed or were persuaded by Lees-Smith, for in July 1907 I was appointed Tutor and Lecturer in Economics, and I began work in the following October. I spent the interval in preparing a course of lectures on Public Finance, and in this connexion I read for the first time Snowden's *Socialist's Budget*, from which I learned some ideas about taxation which I had certainly never come across in my studies for the Diploma.

The college at that time contained fifty students, all men. It had been intended by the founders that both men and women should be provided for, but so far it had not been found practicable to include women students. The men came from a variety of industries; there were miners, railwaymen, carpenters, engineers, ironmoulders, pattern-makers, bookbinders, clerks, postal workers, shop assistants, agricultural labourers, and others. They were practically all Socialists of one brand or another, and there were amongst them some of the wildest and most revolutionary young men in the country. Many of them had come to the college with scholarships provided by their own trade unions or by other Labour organizations, some with scholarships raised by the college from private sources, and some were paying their own fees out of savings. The cost of a year at the college at that time was only fifty-two pounds, but most of the students had to make a considerable sacrifice in order to come. This was true even of those who came with scholarships, for there was no security that their jobs would be kept open for them when they returned to industry. In fact, quite the opposite was likely to be the case, for a man who came back from Ruskin in those days had not increased his popularity with employers. The fees were extraordinarily low, and never covered the cost of maintaining the college, especially as the college year lasted for forty-eight weeks. We only closed for one month at Christmas, and lectures and tuition of some

kind went on during the whole of the rest of the year. The tutors took holidays as they could, generally one at a time, and for periods of a fortnight or a month at most. This absurdly long year was of course a great mistake, both staff and students becoming quite stale long before the end of it. The students went away constantly for week-ends, generally to speak at Independent Labour Party meetings up and down the country, partly to gain practice as speakers, partly with the object of improving their finances, but largely from a real desire to spread the gospel of Socialism, for Socialism at that time was almost a religion with the keen young men of the movement.

The students lived a simple and rather rough life at the college. They did all the household work, including the cleaning and scrubbing, serving meals and washing up. The entire domestic staff consisted of a cook. In earlier days even the cook had been dispensed with. Ruskin Hall was for the first four years of its existence housed in 14 St. Giles, and Vrooman had peculiar ideas about food. He thought that people should eat only when they were hungry, and he had bags of oatmeal and apples, loaves of bread, pieces of cheese, etc., put about the house so that anybody could help himself when he felt inclined, and prepare what he liked. But this was not popular with the majority of the students, and they decided that each student should take a turn at cooking for a week. This did not work well, owing to the varying degrees of lack of skill of the temporary cooks, and Vrooman had to submit to the introduction of a professional cook.

In 1903 the college moved to Walton Street, and became the owner of an old, rather tumble-down house at the bottom of what had been a builder's yard adjoining Worcester College, together with some cottages along Worcester Place. The premises were overcrowded with fifty students, and very few of them could have a separate room. In 1913 the sheds running along one side of the yard were pulled down and new and convenient buildings, including a good lecture hall, were erected, the old house and the cottages being retained.

Before 1913 there was only one very small lecture-room ; from this opened what must originally have been a long loft, which

had been turned into the library. Students sat in the lecture-room and in the library, and the lecturer, in order to make himself heard, had to stand on the step between the two rooms. Close to the front entrance was a very small common room for the students, which contained a piano ; into this room they crowded and sometimes made the most appalling noise. Any one coming into the college would be almost sure to hear the strains of ' The Red Flag ', or uplifted voices taking part in animated discussion on the merits of Marx.

Some years before 1907 the Vroomans, who had lost a good deal of money, had gone back to America, and Charles Beard, afterwards well known as a distinguished American historian, who was associated with them in the founding of the college, had also left. He had done a good deal of teaching there in the early days. The college had begun to depend more and more on the trade unions and other Labour bodies for financial support. It also received a good deal of help from individuals who sympathized with its work. The staff when I joined it consisted of the Principal, Dennis Hird ; the Vice-Principal, Charles Sydney Buxton (appointed at the same time as myself) ; the Secretary, Bertram Wilson ; and a dear old lady named Miss Giles. She took charge of the Correspondence Department, the college having from its earliest days done a good deal of teaching by correspondence. She had worked hard all her life at various causes, and on hearing of the foundation of the college she, though well over sixty, at once offered her services and threw herself with the greatest energy into its life and work. Miss Giles was a sort of mother not only to the residential students but to most of the corresponding students. She always had the latest details as to their circumstances, their families, their joys and sorrows, at her fingers' ends. She lived very simply on an insignificant salary, and did invaluable work by bringing the Correspondence Department to the notice of numerous students. She had travelled a good deal in Europe, and had remarkable descriptive powers. She often had the students to spend an evening with her, taking them for ' walks ' round Rome, Florence, or some other of the great cities she knew, and they must have learned a good deal that was new to them from these talks.

Dennis Hird was a remarkable man, with a striking and most attractive personality. He was born in 1850, and had been a non-collegiate student at Oxford, but had taken only a Fourth in Natural Science. He took Orders, and was for some time secretary of the Church of England Temperance Society. Here, however, difficulties arose. Hird was one of those curious men who like doing something different from, and something which clashes with, the work for which they are paid, and this unfortunate kink seems to have been with him all through life. He had become for the moment more interested in the repudiation of the National Debt than in temperance, and as he spent most of his time in lecturing on the debt when he ought to have been condemning drink, Temple, then Bishop of London, is supposed to have said that either he or Hird would have to leave the society ! It was decided that it would be best for Temple to remain, and Hird was provided by Lady Henry Somerset with the living of Eastnor, Herefordshire. While at Eastnor, as a relaxation from parochial duties he wrote a book entitled *A Christian with Two Wives*. The hero of this book when out in Cairo comes across a charming slave girl whom he decides to buy and marry, and on her announcing that she could not leave her sister behind, he buys and marries them both. He is portrayed as an English country squire, and brings them to his home, where they both have children—apparently about sixteen between them. The ridiculously conventional neighbours are horribly scandalized, and the vicar of the parish is narrow-minded enough to share the general view, and never visits the squire. One day, however, imperative business calls him to the hall, where he is so charmingly entertained that he consents to stay the night. He at once becomes a convert to bigamy, and on returning to his vicarage the following day resigns his living. He is last heard of in Cairo !

The excitement which the book aroused in the neighbourhood might probably have blown over had not one of the villagers taken it too literally and set off to Salt Lake City. Lady Henry Somerset, also taking a serious view of this literary effort, persuaded her protégé to resign, and gave him a pension on the condition that he wrote no more books of that kind. Hird, however, was not an easy man to muzzle, and he was at

the time more interested in propaganda than in money. Before long other books were produced which did not comply with the conditions laid down, and he forfeited his pension. One of these books bore the somewhat startling title *Shear My Sheep*. Hird was, however, the author of other books of a more usual type ; he wrote *An Easy Outline of Evolution*, and he was joint author with W. H. Forbes of a book on Logic which is still used a good deal in Oxford.

At the time of the foundation of Ruskin, Hird, who was somewhat at a loose end and wanted a job, became acquainted with the Vroomans, and he was appointed the first principal of the college. He lectured mainly on what he called Sociology, but his lectures consisted almost entirely of discourses on evolution with a Socialist moral, combined with attacks on all forms of religious belief. He no longer regarded himself as a clergyman, and had become a pronounced atheist or agnostic—I never quite knew which—and possibly he would have called himself a rationalist ; anyhow, he had a great contempt for Christianity, and he gave the students very little which could be called education in the ordinary sense of that term. He did hardly any private tuition, but occasionally set essays which he corrected in a dilatory sort of way. He did, however, have long talks with favourite and promising students from his point of view, mainly on his pet subjects. He was very little at the college—as a rule only from Tuesday to Friday—and he was constantly away speaking at I.L.P. and other Socialist meetings. He was an excellent and most racy speaker, and was extremely popular as a propagandist in the Socialist movement. His home was at Bletchley, where he had a small farm on which he himself worked during his long week-ends. Students were sometimes invited to Bletchley for week-ends, and I remember on one occasion half a dozen students were asked to come over, being told that the change and the country air would do them good. When they arrived they found that there was haymaking to be done, and the reports they brought back of the hard work they had had to put in somewhat diminished the popularity of week-ends at Bletchley.

‘Charlie’ Buxton, as he was always called, was one of the most delightful and promising young men I have ever known,

and, had he lived, I am certain that a distinguished career was assured him and that he could hardly have failed to make his mark upon his time and country. He was the eldest son of Sydney Buxton, afterwards Earl Buxton and Governor-General of South Africa. Charlie had had a brilliant career at Eton and Balliol. He took a Second in Greats, and in 1907, just before he was appointed vice-principal, obtained a First in History.

Bertram Wilson, the secretary, came from a working-class home, and originally entered the college as a student in quite early days. He had been an advanced Radical as a young man, and particularly active as a Single Tax propagandist. He was a very clever fellow, and had succeeded in educating himself to a remarkable extent. He had great administrative gifts and an extraordinary capacity for obtaining subscriptions for the college from the most unlikely sources. Besides his secretarial work he did a good deal of teaching, lecturing principally on Local Government, in connexion with which he had an admirable set of slides.

In addition to the permanent staff we had occasional lectures from members of the university, and an Oxford schoolmaster, Claude Moore, taught Grammar and English Composition. Before I succeeded Lees-Smith and Buxton became vice-principal, most of the teaching seems to have been done by Lees-Smith, who taught Economics, Political Science, and a certain amount of History. Besides this, there was nothing but Hird's lectures, Wilson's lectures on Local Government, and Moore's Grammar lessons, with occasional lectures from outside. I think the students attended very few, if any, lectures in the university at that time.

The more progressive members of the university took a considerable interest in the college, and we had frequent visitors from London and elsewhere, for the college had begun to be recognized by educationists as an important piece of pioneer work. Lord Curzon in the early days of his Chancellorship paid us a visit. When he arrived he was introduced to the staff by Hird, and Miss Giles immediately began to pour out statistics and other information about the correspondence students, to which he replied in an astonished voice : ' God bless my soul,

you don't say so !' He knew nothing whatever about the college when he arrived, but he went round with the students, who showed him their rooms, and he sat on their beds talking to them. By the time he got to the common room he had picked up enough information to enable him to make a most charming and tactful little speech, with which everybody was delighted.

Warren,¹ who was then Vice-Chancellor, not to be outdone by the Chancellor, came to see us a few weeks later. He also made a speech and had tea with the staff and students. During tea, I remember, he asked the students whom they considered to be the best public speaker of the day. On their hesitating to reply, he asked them what they thought of 'my friend Lord Rosebery', whereupon one of the students said that much the best speaker in the country was some Nonconformist preacher in Wales of whom most of us had never heard. Warren was obliged to say he was afraid he had never heard him speak.

For some years before Buxton and I joined the staff Lees-Smith had been the mainstay of the college, and but for his persistence and energy, coupled with his excellent teaching, and but for the success of Wilson in obtaining financial support, I doubt very much whether the college could have survived. There was constant friction between Hird and the rest of the staff, who strongly disapproved of his attempts to turn the college into a hotbed of Socialist and anti-religious propaganda. Before Lees-Smith left to take up an appointment as Professor of Economics at Bristol University, he had obtained the upper hand, and the idea at the back of his mind in connexion with Buxton's and my appointment was, I think, that we should take his place in the struggle with Hird. In spite of the inadequacy of the teaching and the lack of discipline, however, much good work was done by the students in these early days before I knew the college, and this is greatly to their credit. Several of the students of that time have since filled prominent places in the Labour Movement; six of them afterwards became members of Parliament, and two were members of the first

¹ T. H. Warren, afterwards Sir Herbert Warren, K.C.V.O., President of Magdalen.

Labour Government of 1924. There were plenty of opportunities for reading, and many of the students undoubtedly made very good use of their time.

It will be seen from what I have said that the position of the college in 1907 was exceedingly difficult, and for the next two years Buxton and I had in many respects a most unpleasant time. Before Lees-Smith left Hird had begun to pay less and less attention to the college, and Lees-Smith thought that the bulk of the teaching would be left to us as it had been to himself. But this did not turn out to be the case, for on our appointment Hird began to take a more and more active part in the life of the college and in the teaching. The students were divided in opinion with regard to the position. Some of them liked Hird's propaganda, and most of them liked Hird. A few were devoted to him. There were, however, some who strongly disapproved of his attacks on religion, and there were many who really wanted something more solid in the way of education than they obtained from Hird. These were a larger number than appeared on the surface, for the college was very much ruled by a small handful of extremists, and, as so often happens, the majority were diffident about expressing their real opinion for fear of being thought reactionary.

Buxton and I were very well received by Hird, who expressed himself delighted at having two young men with good academic qualifications to help him. We were to have an absolutely free hand ; we knew what was best for the students, and he should welcome our help and advice. But he did not play the game. While he did give us a free hand as regards teaching he was constantly undermining the effects of our work by his own propaganda. ' Mr. Furniss is a capitalist and a Conservative,' the students were told, while Buxton was referred to in front of them as ' the Czar of all the Russias '. Somehow or other—I have never known exactly how, but I have always attributed it to Hird—a story got about that I was a son-in-law of Lord Winterstoke, the head of the Wills family, and that I had been promised a large sum of money for Ruskin by my father-in-law if I could undermine Socialism at the college ! This story even appeared in a South Wales newspaper, and it was widely believed by the students at that time and for many years

afterwards, in spite of my assurance that I had no connexion with Lord Winterstoke and did not even smoke Wills's tobacco. Quite recently I was asked by an old student if I could, through my connexion with the Wills, help his brother to find employment !

In spite of constant attempts to undermine my position, and notwithstanding my lack of experience, I was able to do some good work during those two years. I began with a course of lectures on Public Finance, and also gave a course on Economic Theory, consisting of lectures twice a week throughout the whole year. I tried hard to make my lectures as free from bias as possible, but they were undoubtedly very critical of the Socialist position. I lectured on Karl Marx, but I am afraid I did not realize then the value of some of his work on the historical side and the importance of *Das Kapital* as one of the first thoroughgoing scientific criticisms of capitalism. I was chiefly occupied in refuting Marx's theory of value, to which most of the students clung with religious fervour, but which I regarded as absolute nonsense. I am still quite unrepentant as regards Marx's theory of value. Later on I became much more judicial in my treatment of economic questions. I once gave a long course on Foreign Trade, and at the end of it some of the students asked my wife if she could tell them whether I was a Free Trader or a Tariff Reformer ! The majority of the students had very one-sided notions about economic problems, knowing nothing apart from the Socialist point of view, and even as to this they were often very ill-informed. I urged upon them the importance of understanding thoroughly the system they were always criticizing, and I spent much time in analysing for them the organization of industry. This they needed, and many of them appreciated the opportunity of looking all round the questions in which they were interested.

These lectures meant a tremendous amount of work for me. I had written some of those on Public Finance before going to the college, but many I had to write during the course. I had also to prepare my course on Economic Theory as I went along, I had to get up *Das Kapital* for the first time, and I made a fairly comprehensive study of trade unionism, with an elaborate analysis of the Webbs' *History of Trade Unionism* and of their

Industrial Democracy. At first I wrote out my lectures almost in full, and practically learned them by heart, but later I wrote them out less fully and did not get them up with so much verbal accuracy. I have always found that the mere process of dictating fairly full notes for a lecture, even when I did not learn them by heart afterwards, was a very great help, especially as regards arrangement. I rarely repeated lectures exactly as they had been written, but by writing them out in the first instance pretty fully I acquired a mass of material which provided me with the groundwork of my courses and saved me the trouble of doing work over again. My own experience has led me to feel sure that young lecturers would save themselves much future trouble if they took great pains in the preparation of their early courses.

My first lecture was not a great success. I had prepared what I thought was sufficient material for a fifty minutes' talk, but it lasted me only half an hour. However, we filled up the hour with quite a good discussion. For some time after that I put far too much into my lectures, and on re-reading them I am quite astonished at my erudition in those days. Experience has taught me that as a general rule lectures on Economics can usefully discuss only a very few points at a time.

Buxton and I introduced regular individual tuition and regular essay-writing. Each student could not receive as much tuition or write as many essays as we should have liked, as there were fifty of them and only two of us. Apart from this we were both new to the work and much occupied in getting up lectures. But we each of us took about six students a day for half an hour each. We also introduced a written examination at the end of each term with the object of testing the progress made by the students. The proposal was to set what we called revision papers. But this was strenuously resisted—with the backing of Hird, as I believe—as having a bourgeois taint, and the few who consented to do the papers had a very bad time with their fellow-students.

My wife and I very soon established social relations with the students. We sometimes had tea with them at the college, followed by talks in the common room, and almost every Saturday we had four students to tea with us at our house in

Merton Street. These teas were always followed by long discussions, generally on Socialism, which occasionally went on until ten o'clock! As a general rule, however, we walked back to the college with the men for the Saturday evening social, which was a great institution. The fifty students, with a good many visitors, crowded into the small lecture-room, where we had coffee and where we all smoked all the time. We generally began with some songs and choruses, and then had a lecture, as a rule by some university man or Labour leader. I well remember lectures by William Temple, Grant Robertson, R. R. Marett, H. A. L. Fisher, W. H. C. Davis, W. D. Ross, Edwin Cannan, David Shackleton, and Albert Mansbridge. The lecturers had to be prepared to stand a pretty severe heckling, for their lectures were always followed by terrific discussions, which sometimes lasted until nearly midnight. These social evenings were really a great feature in the life of Ruskin College, and I have never since come across anything with quite the same atmosphere. I am not alluding *only* to the atmosphere in the narrower sense of the word, which had become fairly dense by the end of the evening. With the opening of the new hall in 1913 the whole form of social gatherings necessarily underwent a change, and the college has never recaptured the spirit of those old socials.

We happened to have amongst the students some very fine singers, and my wife started a little choral society, which used to meet regularly at our house, one or two of her girl friends supplying the female voices. They did good music—old madrigals and the like—always performing at the socials, singing at little concerts in the city, and on one occasion gaining the first prize at a choral festival.

We established many contacts at Ruskin, and there was one among the students of the early days who became a very close friend. Jack Lawson,¹ a Durham miner, had gained a scholarship shortly after his marriage. His young wife, determined not to be left behind, had the courage to sell up her home and to take a position as domestic servant in a small house in

¹ Afterwards Labour M.P. for Chester-le-Street, Financial Secretary to the War Office (1924), Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Labour (1929).

Oxford. Here she read and studied and attended all possible lectures, in order to be able to share her husband's intellectual interests. She soon became an intimate friend of my wife's ; we saw a great deal of her and Jack, and we have always kept in close touch with one another.

Hird's attitude and the total lack of discipline that prevailed made our task of trying to introduce something like order and a real educational standard into the college very difficult. The students were much under the dominion of a few extremist ringleaders, who were constantly demanding that no Economics apart from Marx should be taught and that this should be taught only from the Marxian standpoint. The lack of discipline was appalling, the students doing almost exactly what they liked. There were no proper timetables, and the men cut lectures and essays as they pleased, though I must say that as regards their work with me they were on the whole very regular. They spent an enormous amount of time in debating college matters amongst themselves, generally after the midday dinner, and they sometimes sat in the dining-room all the afternoon, discussing changes which they considered desirable in domestic arrangements or in the curriculum. They were frequently sending deputations to the principal to complain of the food provided and to demand other changes in connexion with all sorts of matters. On these occasions Hird would send for the rest of the staff, because—as he said—he so much valued our advice, and we would sometimes spend the whole morning arguing with the students over some quite trivial matter—for example, as to whether they should or should not have bananas for tea ! A written reply would be given to the delegates to take back to the body of the students, but the next day we generally discovered that Hird had thrown over the decision arrived at, so that the men usually had their way. As I have said, they were constantly away at week-ends speaking in the country, but they also did a great deal of public speaking in Oxford, and on almost any morning a few students might be seen at the Martyrs' Memorial haranguing a crowd on Socialism. This sort of thing naturally did not add to the popularity of the college in Oxford ; it was difficult to persuade members of the university that it was an

educational institution, and appeals for financial support were made harder to justify.

The ideas about Buxton and myself which had been instilled into the students by Hird were beginning to take more and more hold, and many of them I think honestly believed that we had some sinister motive behind our teaching. In after years an old student once said to me: 'Some of us really thought you were paid to deceive us.' The Executive Committee of the Governing Council seem to have been very ignorant of what was going on, but Buxton, as vice-principal, was allowed to attend executive meetings, and he at last managed to make the committee realize something of the state of affairs. At the end of 1908 things reached such a pitch that the executive decided to have an inquiry into the teaching and discipline at the college, and a sub-committee was appointed consisting of C. W. Bowerman, M. P. Taylor of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, and Dr. A. J. Carlyle of University College, who was one of the university members of the committee. The inquiry lasted for some weeks, and Hird, Buxton, Wilson, and myself all put in long memoranda, and were cross-examined more than once by the committee. Some of the students also gave oral evidence.

But while this inquiry was going on Hird was stirring up the extremists amongst the students to take more definite action against the objects and methods of the college, and he arranged a meeting in Oxford at which the Plebs League was formed. The object of this League was to make war on what its members called capitalist or bourgeois education, and they advocated education with a Socialist (which meant Marxian) and a class-conscious basis. The college was to be captured by the League, and all the university influence to which, as they believed, it was subject, was to be swept away. With the formation of the Plebs League began a struggle between Education and what afterwards became known as Independent Working Class Education—a struggle which has continued to the present day, with the most disastrous effects upon adult working-class education.

During all this time Hird was outwardly on the most friendly terms with the rest of the staff, and he more than once told

my wife how much he appreciated my work at the college. He did not know what he should do without me. But at the same time he had entered into negotiations with the man he had fixed upon to succeed me as Lecturer in Economics ! He seems to have been optimistic about the result of the inquiry, but the report of the sub-committee came down strongly on the side of Buxton, Wilson, and myself, and Hird was sharply criticized for the propagandist nature of his teaching and for his failure to maintain discipline. In spite of this, however, a majority of the members of the Executive Committee had made up their minds, before the meeting at which the report was to be discussed, to ask us three to resign. Lees-Smith, on giving up his position as Vice-Principal, had become Chairman of the Executive Committee, but he was away in India during the inquiry. He, however, arrived back in London towards the end of March 1909, the day before the executive was to meet and make its decision, and on his way up to Oxford for the meeting he pointed out to some of the members of the committee who were travelling with him that if they decided to ask us to resign and allowed Hird to remain they would be throwing over the sub-committee and its report, and that the whole of the inquiry would be stultified. Lees-Smith carried his point, and it was decided that Hird should be asked to resign.

VIII

THE STRIKE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

HIRD'S immediate resignation on the ground that he had failed to maintain discipline was demanded at a meeting of the committee held in London. He had no alternative but to resign, and he made only one request—namely, that he should be allowed to deliver a farewell speech to the students in the college. This was agreed to, but it was decided that a member of the committee should be present. However, Hird hurried back to Oxford and made his farewell speech before the appointed member of the committee arrived. It was a most masterly speech. He implored the students to take his departure calmly ; he hoped that it would not occur to them to make trouble with the staff, that they would not think of boycotting lectures, etc., etc. Hird of course had a strong following among the students. He was really beloved by some of them, who admired his teaching, and a good many undoubtedly thought that he was a hardly used man.

As a matter of fact there was something to be said for the point of view held by many of the students. Some of them were not getting the kind of education they thought they ought to have ; they wanted to study nothing but Marx and to be trained as Socialist propagandists. There were, no doubt, certain modifications and extensions of the curriculum which might have been made with advantage. At that time we did not give them nearly enough information about the Socialist and Labour Movement, and insufficient attention was paid to trade union problems and co-operation. We hardly touched the history of Socialism. There was no good reason why *Das Kapital* should not have been taught by a Marxian, so long as the students would submit to hear criticisms by another teacher. And Buxton and I were often too academic in the way we handled our subjects. Neither of us knew much about working men, and had gradually to feel our way towards the

best method of appealing to them and arousing their interest. You cannot teach Economics to working men in the same way in which it can be taught to undergraduates. The ordinary undergraduate can regard economic questions, as an onlooker, from a more or less aloof attitude, much as he regards history or science. But with the working man you are at once in touch with his life problems. He is up against economic questions which affect him vitally almost every day, and if his interest is to be secured, Economic Theory must at the outset at any rate be brought to bear on the actual facts that he meets with in his industry and his everyday life. When I began to teach I knew very little of the facts of industry, and my students were constantly drawing my attention to points which made me review my position with regard to a great deal of what I had derived from books. I learned much from the students, and they gradually taught me how to teach them.

Hird's farewell speech was a match deliberately lit and thrown among very inflammable material, and it was immediately followed by what was rather absurdly known as the 'Ruskin College Strike'. The students were always ready to act somewhat as if they were a trade union and the staff their employers, and I have often had to remind them that while they for the most part were sent by their trade unions to study, we were employed by their trade unions to teach them. The strike occurred at a time when there was nothing of very great interest happening in the world outside, and it therefore obtained a prominence in the Press much greater than the occasion warranted. The students refused to attend lectures, to write essays, or to have any dealings with the staff. A strike committee was formed, and the reinstatement of Hird and more teaching along his lines were demanded. The college, the station, and my house were picketed, and the pickets went so far as to follow my wife to the station when she was going to London for the day. The object of picketing the station was, I believe, to watch any possible comings and goings between the staff and the Executive, but why two of the men stood in the snow outside my house in Merton Street for a great part of the day I have never been able to discover! The students held constant meetings in the college, which were

often extremely heated, as there was from the first a small minority against the strike. Two men were courageous enough—for it needed courage to stand up to the violence of some of the extremists—to speak quite frankly against the whole thing. In the course of a day or two the minority increased to seven, and it was largely through the persistence of these seven men that the strike was finally broken. The executive met in London soon after the outbreak, and sent two of its members to reason with the students, but without success.

Charlie Buxton, who was living in the college, had a most uncomfortable time. He was almost heart-broken at being cut by the men, believing that he had won their confidence and that many of them regarded him as a friend. He did not realize, nor did I myself at the time, that the strike was a matter of principle and that there was very little personal feeling involved. Many of the most extreme men, I think, liked us, and I can count not a few of them amongst my friends at the present time. At the moment, however, it seemed as if all our work had been useless, and that the college and all it stood for was likely to go down in the conflict. Charlie, who was then not twenty-five, handled the business in the most statesman-like manner, always keeping his temper, helping and advising the minority, and trying every possible method of conciliation. It was certainly largely owing to his skill and tact that the split among the students gradually widened to such an extent that it became possible to arrive at an understanding.

By this time Charlie had become a very intimate friend of ours. He was constantly at our house, and during the strike spent almost every evening with us discussing the situation. He was very fond of reading aloud, and even through this crisis I remember him reading us passages from favourite poets and other writers. Miss Giles was of course very much upset by the behaviour of her 'boys', as she called them, and she was often with us, discussing ways and means of restoring peace and denouncing Hird in the most vigorous terms.

The strike lasted just over a week, and at the end of that time an agreement was come to. The college was to be closed for a fortnight, and all the students were to be allowed to come

back if they agreed to keep the rules and loyally support the objects for which the college stood. About fifteen students decided to leave, and some thirty-five returned. Hird was of course not in residence during the strike, but the strikers certainly kept in touch with him, and he was already engaged in planning the establishment of a rival college. In the course of the summer the Central Labour College, afterwards known as the Labour College, was opened, with Hird as Principal, at a house in Bradmore Road, a most respectable part of North Oxford. The house was leased from St. John's College, and there seems to have been some misunderstanding as to the purpose for which it was to be used. Before long the neighbours began to complain of the constant disturbances which took place, and St. John's, having discovered that some of the terms of the lease were not being observed, gave Hird notice to quit, and towards the end of 1910 the college removed to Penywern Road, Earl's Court, London. It had been founded with the aid of the South Wales Miners' Association and the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (afterwards the National Union of Railwaymen), whose support Hird had secured largely through the representations made to their unions by some of the Welsh miners and railwaymen who were at Ruskin. Though Hird and his friends never ceased to denounce Ruskin College for living, as they maintained, on the ill-gotten gains of capitalists, they also obtained a good deal of money from some rich sympathizers.

On his resignation Hird had been offered a life pension of one hundred and fifty pounds a year to be paid so long as he took no steps calculated to be injurious to the college. But owing to an extraordinary oversight this condition was left out of the agreement. When the Central Labour College was established the Ruskin College authorities naturally thought that Hird had committed a breach of the agreement and declined to pay the pension, whereupon Hird brought an action against the college. The executive took counsel's opinion, and two of the leading lawyers of the day said that they had not a leg to stand on. Notwithstanding this the trade union members of the executive were determined to fight the matter out, saying that they could not face their trade

unions and tell them that they were responsible for promising to pay Hird an unconditional pension of one hundred and fifty pounds a year for life. The case went into court ; of course Hird won, and the college was involved in a loss of four hundred pounds for costs in addition to the pension. Hird received the pension until he died in 1920, and its payment made a considerable strain on the always inadequate finances of the college.

The foundation of the Labour College was a great blow to Ruskin and to the adult education movement generally, for since that time there has been a continual controversy between the advocates of Education in the ordinary sense of the word and the advocates of Independent Working Class Education, or Education based on the Class War with the doctrines of Marx as its gospel. I have always held that there is a place for Socialist and even for Marxian propaganda, and there is no reason why Ruskin College and the Labour College should not have worked along their own lines without friction. But the Labour College and the Plebs League have never accepted this point of view, a strong tenet of their creed being undying hostility to all forms of what they call ' bourgeois ' or ' capitalist ' education. Their attitude has been : ' You *shall* be a Marxian, and if you don't believe in Marx we'll make you. If you believe in any other form of education than ours you are a traitor to the cause and to the class-conscious proletariat.'

The friction between the two schools of thought has added enormously to the difficulty of obtaining adequate financial support for both Ruskin College and the Labour College. Whenever an appeal has been made to a trade union for scholarships by one college it has nearly always been followed by a counter-appeal from the other, with the result that many a trade union has said : ' A curse on both your houses ', and refused scholarships altogether. The trade unions and other Labour bodies have often been placed in a very difficult position, for they can never be sure that the giving of financial support to one of the colleges will not lead to agitation amongst their members who are adherents of the other. Every opportunity has been seized by those responsible for the Labour College to vilify and misrepresent any action taken by Ruskin College, but I can

honestly say that Ruskin has very wisely done its best to abstain from controversy with the Labour College. It has of course on occasion been obliged to defend itself against some of the grosser attacks made upon it, but it has only asked to be let alone to carry on its work unmolested.

Up to this time Ruskin College had had to meet attacks from those who regarded it as too Socialist. It henceforth became exposed to two lines of assault—on the one hand accused of being a hotbed of revolution and on the other a stronghold of reaction. Later it was either 'Bolshevist' or 'bourgeois'. The task of convincing the public that it was an educational institution, difficult enough at any time, became much more so with the advent of the Labour College. The Labour College had a considerable advantage over Ruskin in the matter of appealing for support. With two or three months' training men could be turned out who, if they had a certain facility in speaking—and most of the people who went to the Labour College were pretty good at talking—could spout the ordinary claptrap revolutionary phrases and make a fairly telling appeal to the unthinking, uneducated, and restless young men whom they addressed. It is easy to play on the emotions of men who are suffering from low wages and unemployment—men who have the idea that things cannot be much worse and that anything may be worth trying. The Labour College soon started classes up and down the country, from which a considerable number of propagandists were turned out, and by their means the college obtained a fairly solid backing from the more revolutionary section of the Labour Movement. The Plebs League published a monthly magazine called *The Plebs*, which, though utterly unscrupulous, was often cleverly and attractively written, and it at times had a wide circulation.

With Ruskin College things were very different. We aimed at giving our students a fairly intensive education in certain subjects. The students came for one year or two years, and we only turned out some twenty or thirty a year at the most. Our object was not primarily to produce lecturers or speakers at all, and we of course realized that many of the students would never be successful in this direction. When they went

back to their homes we naturally hoped that they would make the college known to their friends and use what opportunities occurred to them of bringing it to the notice of the labour bodies to which they belonged. But, unlike the Labour College, we never regarded our ex-students as primarily propagandists for the college.

There are many men and women who regard education simply as a means of learning a creed and how to preach it. But such people form an unstable foundation for the building of an educated democracy. As a rule they know nothing but the creed they have swallowed, and they are incapable either of defending it or of refuting other creeds that are plausibly presented to them. Few things in my experience as a teacher of working men have been more depressing than to see clever and promising young men turning their backs on education, refusing to think for themselves, and being content to become propagandists in the wild hope of finding a short-cut to the millennium, amongst a people on the whole slow to move, conservative in outlook, and rooted in tradition. In a few years' time at the most these enthusiasts become disillusioned and pessimistic, and I can think of more than one such who started as the farthest outpost of the left wing but who are now to be numbered among the reactionaries.

If education means anything it must mean an attempt to help people to think for themselves, to form reasoned judgments and build up their own creeds. The teacher naturally hopes that his pupils will arrive at the same conclusions as himself, if he has sufficient faith in his own opinions. But if they adopt points of view differing from his own he has no ground for complaint, for, to take politics as an example, he ought to prefer that a man should become a Conservative with reasons for the faith that is in him than that he should become an ill-informed Labour man echoing the parrot phrases of other people.

The teaching we gave the students at Ruskin College often had very depressing effects upon them at first, and many of the men, after shedding half-baked and ill-digested notions, went through a period of almost complete scepticism, not knowing what to believe. Most of them expected to find

cut-and-dried answers to every question they raised, but, when they found these were unattainable, those who meant business usually settled down to real thinking, and by the time they left the college they at least knew in many cases that there were problems to be solved where they had thought all was certainty, and questions to be settled that they had not thought worth considering. I feel sure that they went out into life better able to grapple with its difficulties and their surroundings than those who had merely been taught what to think.

There can be no doubt that the hostility of the working people twenty years ago to the universities and to university teaching was partly due to the universities themselves, but more particularly to the educational system of the country. Numbers of boys and girls did not stay at school even until they were fourteen ; a considerable number left at twelve, and some even earlier. Of the children who left the elementary schools only a mere handful found their way to secondary schools, and but a sprinkling of these reached a university. It was not so much that the universities would not take students from the working class as that the working class had neither the means nor the educational equipment to enable them to go. Those who did obtain a university education were generally exceptionally clever boys, who naturally found their way into professional employment, and gradually drifted away from their own people. The universities were therefore regarded by thoughtful working men rather as places where men of their own class were turned into 'gentlemen' or superior persons who looked down on those from whom they had sprung.

The curricula of the universities were of course adapted to the needs of middle-class boys who came from the public schools, most of whom intended to enter one of the professions, and there was much truth in the criticism that the education given at Oxford was bourgeois and middle-class. It was, at any rate, 'class' education, and in some respects narrow. The men who came to Ruskin College soon discovered that many of the subjects in which they were interested—subjects which they rightly regarded as of national importance—were not taught at all in the university. They knew that the

average undergraduate went down with only the merest smattering of Economics and with scarcely any knowledge of the history of his own time. When I was an undergraduate English History so far as Oxford was concerned stopped at the Battle of Waterloo. I suppose by 1907 it went a little farther, but practically nothing was taught with regard to nineteenth-century thought or the development of nineteenth-century movements. For years I was the only teacher in Oxford who lectured on the history and principles of trade unionism or on the co-operative movement. Undergraduates at that time left Oxford, as I had done myself, in almost complete ignorance of the working classes and of working-class thought—that is, of the life and opinions of the great majority of the nation of which they claimed to be the ruling class. Of course much of the criticism of Oxford and of universities in general was absurd, and the organized workers have never seriously taken in hand the question of university reform. The possibilities of university reform are closely linked up with changes in the educational system as a whole, and the widening of elementary and secondary education has already affected the universities.

The college reopened in April 1909 with some thirty-five students, all pledged to its loyal support. But from the first about half the number made it apparent that their notion of loyalty left much to be desired. In fact, these students had come back with the express purpose of making trouble, and they hoped to wreck the college and turn it into an institution under the control of the Plebs League. The men formed themselves into two hostile camps, one body loyally upholding the principles for which Ruskin stood, but often exasperating the other camp by the violence with which they attacked the Central Labour College and its ideas. The rebels never ceased attempting to undermine the authority of the staff, and they devised the most subtle means for trying to convince their fellow-students that our teaching was biassed and useless. They kept in close touch with their friends at the Central Labour College, and everything that happened at Ruskin was reported there. Students who wanted to work were hustled and disturbed ; in fact, it became almost impossible for any

steady work to be carried on. There were constant arguments and discussions between the two parties ; on occasions I believe blows were resorted to, and during one of these violent altercations a knife was actually produced ! Charlie Buxton was in charge of the college as Vice-Principal, and I was the only other full-time tutor, though Wilson continued to take some part in the teaching. The atmosphere of the place was most disagreeable, and we had a very trying time. Many of the students demanded that Sociology should be taught, by which they meant teaching on Hird's lines, and first L. T. Hobhouse and then J. A. Hobson were brought down to lecture on what, as a sort of sop to the malcontents, was called Sociology. This, however, by no means satisfied them.

We had very little holiday all through this year, and the strain of the continual struggle told upon us all. In September, Dr. Gilbert Slater was appointed Principal. He was a Cambridge man, and a Socialist of some years' standing. He had been Labour Mayor of Woolwich, and had a fairly wide knowledge of the working-class movement. He had already made a name for himself as an economic historian by his *English Peasantry and the Enclosure of the Common Fields*. Slater made an important addition to our teaching staff, and relieved Buxton and myself of some of the strain and responsibility we had undergone for the past six months. With the arrival of seven or eight new students in September the majority in favour of order was increased, and the position was definitely improved. But it was not until the beginning of 1910, after two of the ringleaders among the rebels had been expelled and when most of the other malcontents had left, that the college was able to settle down to anything like its normal life.

It may perhaps be asked why more drastic steps were not taken with these revolutionary students ? Why were they not all expelled from the college ? It must be remembered that they were not boys, many of them being men of thirty or more. The majority had been sent by their trade unions or other labour bodies, and any severe measures would have been at once challenged by appeals from the students to the organizations responsible for them. This would have meant that the whole position of the college would have been

debated throughout some of the leading trade unions of the country, and it would have been extremely difficult to present our case to large bodies of men most of whom were completely ignorant of educational principles. The trade unions had only been induced with great difficulty to provide scholarships; they are always chary about spending money on objects which lie outside their recognized functions, and had we expelled the students they had sent they would almost certainly have seized the opportunity to withdraw their support altogether. Apart from this, there was very little we could definitely take hold of, and it would have been difficult to bring specific charges against individual students. They had always been allowed considerable latitude as regards attendance at lectures and their work generally, and in these matters they did manage to keep just within bounds. Many of them were really very good fellows, but some were weak and easily led, and they all had a great fear of being thought reactionary. The ring-leaders were wild, and certainly unscrupulous in their methods, but they were not fools or ruffians. They were obsessed by a sort of religious fervour, and were almost prepared to die for the Plebs League and the cause of Independent Working-Class Education. To expel half the college would certainly have been much misunderstood, and would undoubtedly have done it irreparable harm in the future. I feel sure we were right to follow the course we adopted.

Even after Slater took command we were still understaffed. Buxton had been adopted as Liberal candidate for the Woodbridge Division of Suffolk, and he was away most of the time during the last three months of 1909 working in his constituency. Slater, Wilson, and I did our best to carry on the teaching, and the students began to attend some courses of lectures in the university. For a few weeks during this time Slater brought down to the college an old friend of his to help us. This was Frederick Rogers. He was a Liberal who had spent a great part of his life in advocating old age pensions, and he was well known in this connexion. He was over sixty, and knew very little about teaching, and though he was supposed to lecture on History, most of his lectures consisted of an account of his efforts to obtain old age pensions. The

students treated him with kindly amusement, and he was looked upon as rather a joke in the college, though every one liked him.

At the end of the year Charlie Buxton decided to leave the college, with the intention of taking up a political career, and early in 1910 Wilson also left, having obtained an important appointment at the Birmingham Labour Exchange.

IX

THE COTSWOLDS AND ELECTIONEERING

DURING this period from the middle of 1907 to the beginning of 1910 the lives of my wife and myself were very much bound up with Ruskin College, and it had absorbed most of our time and thoughts. But we had by no means lost touch with other interests or with friends outside the college. My wife's old home near Wargrave was within easy reach of Oxford, and she had many friends in that neighbourhood. We were often at Bear Place and at Bisham Abbey, the home of her uncle and aunt, Sir Henry and Lady Vansittart Neale. About this time too Lord Aldenham and his family, who were very old friends, were spending a great part of the year at their house at Clifton Hampden, only eight miles from Oxford, and quiet week-ends there gave us delightful intervals of rest from our strenuous work. Considering that all these people were old-fashioned Tories and that they regarded us as 'rank Radicals' if not 'rabid Socialists', and looked upon Ruskin College as a hotbed of iniquity, it says much for their real affection that neither then nor afterwards did their friendship ever fail us.

There was more entertaining done in Oxford in those days than there is now, the change that has taken place in this respect being due no doubt to the rise in prices since the war. The professors were a good deal better off on nine hundred a year than they are now on twelve hundred. At some of the dinner-parties we went to we came across some amusing criticisms, and the ignorance with regard to the college and its work amongst Oxford people who might have been expected to take some interest in a new educational venture that had sprung up in their midst was really astonishing. I remember once the lady whom I took in to dinner—the wife of a well-known Oxford don—remarking to me: 'I think it is a pity to teach working men nothing but art.' And

at almost the same moment her husband was solemnly announcing to my wife in connexion with something she had said about the College that, 'I neither like nor take the slightest interest in the working classes!' But I am afraid that all the criticisms did not arise from ignorance. A well-known professor, whenever he met my wife, made a point of saying in a very supercilious voice: 'Let me see. Where *is* Ruskin Hall?' To which she, to his great annoyance, always replied: 'Well, do you know where Worcester College is?'

I kept in touch as far as I could with what was going on in the university. In 1909 I was co-opted a member of the Committee for Economics, and took some part in widening the scope of the examination for the Diploma. In 1907 I was made a member of the Senior Common Room at Hertford, and frequently dined there on guest-nights, meeting the fellows and guests from other colleges. In that year also I was elected a member of the Oxford Political Economy Club, an interesting society founded by Goldwin Smith in 1860, of which Thorold Rogers, Bonamy Price, and other well-known Oxford men of that day had been early members. We dine together twice a term, and the dinners are followed by a discussion on some economic question. These discussions helped to keep me in touch with the thought of the university on many current problems. In those days there were hardly any economists in Oxford, and there were therefore very few in the club. Its membership, which was limited to thirty, had to be made up from amongst teachers of other subjects, and the club contained a large proportion of philosophers and historians, who were, however, never loath to introduce subjects and to express their opinion on economic matters. I introduced questions when my turn came round, and have been a regular attendant of the club down to the present day.

We saw much of Egerton and his family, and for some years I went for weekly walks with him. He had read widely on a variety of subjects, and was a very good talker. I also went for weekly walks with L. L. Price, who helped to keep me up-to-date in the literature of my own subject, as he read almost every new book on Economics that came out. Edgeworth was another walking companion, and walks with him

were a strenuous affair, as he went very fast and for long distances, talking the whole time and asking my opinion on all sorts of economic questions about which he of course knew far more than I did. He always himself disliked being pressed with questions, and I remember on one occasion going for a long walk with him and Graham Brooks, an American economist. Graham Brooks tried to pump Edgeworth all the time, and at last he said : ' I don't know why I should be cross-examined in this way ; why don't you ask Furniss ? ' I first met Edwin Cannan in 1907, and from that time onwards he and Mrs. Cannan have been amongst our most intimate Oxford friends.

We knew a good many undergraduates, chiefly Balliol and Oriel men, and long walks and elaborate teas with them kept us in touch with undergraduate life. The Oriel men we came to know through my cousin T. E. Sanderson, who came up in 1906. He was the only son of my uncle Tom Sanderson, who had become a hopeless invalid in 1900, and since that time I had acted as a sort of guardian to Tommy. He was almost like a son to us, and was constantly with us down to the outbreak of the War, in which, like so many other of our young friends of that period, he lost his life. Shortly before going to Ruskin I formed a little society amongst some undergraduates for the discussion of economic questions. I think we called ourselves the ' Undefinables '. We met fortnightly at my house and discussed papers, but the society did not last long, as I became too busy at Ruskin to give the time to it.

During these years a new little girl friend I had made in 1907, just before going to Ruskin, was constantly staying with us in Oxford. While I was at Doayne's nursing-home recovering from my third operation to my eyes, Magda's father brought her to see me. Magda, who was aged eight, insisted on being left alone with me, and sent her father away. After that she came every day, being left by her father and called for at the time she stated. She was a most fascinating child, and I soon came to know her very well. From that time onwards she wrote to me during all her schooldays ; for years I had almost weekly letters from her, and there was rarely

an interval longer than a month—an unusually regular correspondence for a small girl. When Magda came to stay with us I sometimes took her with me to the college to see my 'boys', as she called them. I took her once to tea with Charlie Buxton, who had a twin brother and sister to whom he was much devoted. In order to amuse Magda he told her he was going to show her the photographs of his twin brother and sister, and was considerably disconcerted by her frank reply: 'Oh, but I don't like twins!' On another occasion, when she was a little older, I remember introducing her to Henry Allsopp, who was then vice-principal of the college. After a time she became a little embarrassed, and seemed eager to say something, finally coming out with: 'Please, Mr. Allsopp, I hope you won't mind my asking, but are you beer?' Magda is now married and has a boy of her own, and she still remains one of my best friends.

In 1908 we first began to explore the Cotswolds, a part of the country with which we became very familiar in later years. Our first expedition was to Stow-on-the-Wold, where we spent the night, walking back as far as Shipton-under-Wychwood the next day. We had several other week-end walks during this summer, and spent part of our very meagre holiday at the Fosse Bridge Inn, a well-known resort of Oxford men, on the Fosse Way, about seven miles from Cirencester. In the spring of 1909 we stayed for a week-end at Ascott-under-Wychwood, the village where we had inspected a house some years before when we were thinking of living near Oxford. We were so charmed with it that we asked at our inn whether there were any houses to be let, and were told that there was a small farm-house at the end of the village. We went to look at this more out of curiosity than anything else, but were so much pleased with the little house that we immediately decided to take it, and for the next few years it was to Stone End that we rushed for rest and quiet whenever we got the opportunity.

We were there a great part of the summer of 1909, I going backwards and forwards every day to my work at Ruskin. We soon began to make friends with the village people, and we were there all through the general election of January 1910.

My wife and I by this time had become advanced Radicals, but, though we were not as yet Socialists, I should have voted for a Labour candidate had there been one for the Banbury Division of Oxfordshire. I actually did vote Labour at this election, as those were the days of plural voting. I travelled up to vote for the Labour candidate for North-East Derbyshire, where I had some property. He is the only Labour man for whom I have so far voted who has been successful !

All through this summer Stone End became a sort of oasis for us from the difficult and uncomfortable atmosphere at the college. We used to have quiet week-ends, and Charlie Buxton often managed to get down by an early train on Sunday, sometimes arriving before we were up, and singing loudly in the garden to remind us that it was time for breakfast. We would set out for long rambles over the hills, either taking sandwiches or lunching on bread and cheese and beer in village pubs—sitting under stone walls while Charlie read aloud his favourite poems and talking on every subject under the sun, but nearly always working round to Socialism. After one of these expeditions Charlie, who was always writing poetry, sent my wife on the Monday morning the following lines :

Stillness of death and a lowering cloud,
Fruit where the flowers have been.
Yet a lark is singing his song uncowed,
There is sun on the distant green.

It was at this January election that my wife and I made our appearance on a political platform. I made my first political speech at Littlemore, where I had to keep the meeting quiet until Philip Morrell arrived. I had done a certain amount of public speaking before this, and in 1909 I had spoken once or twice in support of Labour Exchanges. On one occasion, I remember, I addressed the Bristol I.L.P. on this subject. We both threw ourselves with great vigour into the campaign in the Banbury Division, where Eustace Fiennes was the Liberal candidate and Robert Brassey the Conservative. I had rather an unfortunate experience at the first meeting at which I took the chair. There was so much

obstruction that I finally had to order one of the audience to be removed. The stewards unfortunately fell upon the wrong man, who turned out to be rather delicate and who was somewhat hurt in the scuffle. We went to meetings almost every night in the villages round Ascott, both speaking, I on the Free Trade question and my wife generally on the Land Campaign, for those were the days of Lloyd George's Land Taxes and the Land Song, which was sung *ad nauseam*. Looking back on it now, it seems astonishing what enthusiasm this land question aroused among the agricultural workers. We were generally occupied at meetings in keeping audiences together until Fiennes arrived, and he sometimes did not arrive at the meeting where we were until nearly midnight. He tried to get in a great many meetings each night, but he had only one very long speech, which he never could cut down. We knew it by heart by the end of the campaign; it was an excellent speech, in spite of a few fallacies. These were never detected, though we always trembled as we heard him nearing them. I remember being much amused at one of Fiennes's meetings when in a moment of enthusiasm he turned to his friends on the platform and said, looking at me: 'I have my little band of supporters, one of whom has given up his work to come and help me!' I had given up my holiday, but certainly not my work, for all through the election I went into Oxford by the eight o'clock train from Ascott, often not getting back after teaching all day until six-thirty, and then setting out immediately to a meeting. We often walked miles to and from meetings, getting to bed at any hour in the morning. Sometimes it was pretty rough work, and on one occasion stones were thrown at us as we left the village. However, it was all a great experience. Fiennes was not returned, but he was not far out. Charlie Buxton was also unsuccessful in the Woodbridge Division. We should like to have worked for him, but did not do so, as Higham was in the division, and my father was working for the Conservatives. Charlie went to call on my father, however, and they made great friends in spite of their being on opposite sides.

The result of combining all these election activities with my work at the college was, as might perhaps have been foreseen.

that I had a serious breakdown at the end of January 1910, when my heart was found to be badly strained. I struggled on at the college until the middle of March, when I was ordered to take a term off and go away. This might have been very awkward at a time when we were so short-handed with regard to tutors, but fortunately my friend R. H. Tawney was able to undertake the economic teaching during my absence. My wife and I spent ten weeks in lodgings at Littlehampton, the doctors there saying that there was nothing much wrong with my heart, but that I was suffering from neurasthenia, and I underwent a treatment for nerves. We had a dreary time, which my wife and my friends did their best to enliven for me. My wife read to me much more I am sure than was good for her, and Molly Pope and Charlie Buxton paid us visits. In the afternoons I was dragged about in a Bath chair. According to the Bath-chair man there were only two ways we could go—one along the sea front and one to the cemetery, he generally preferring the cemetery!

At the end of May we were told that Swiss mountain air would be good for me, and walks were recommended. So we set out to Montreux. After a short time there we moved up to Les Avants, and I began taking longish mountain walks. But all the time I was getting so obviously worse that I consulted a Montreux doctor. He pointed out that my heart was pretty bad, and said: ' 'Ills, you cannot 'ave 'em, and steps, they are not for you '—advice not easy to follow in Switzerland. We moved down to Glion, but Glion was by no means devoid of ' 'ills and steps', so we finally decided to come home. I then consulted Lauder Brunton, who did not think much of the nerves theory, but took a serious view of the state of my heart, saying that all the treatment I had had and the high altitudes had been very bad for me, and that he doubted whether I should ever be able to do very much again. However, he advised me to go to Llangammarch Wells, a place even now not nearly as well known as it ought to be. The springs there contain a large amount of barium, and its effect on me was marvellous. When I first went I could not walk fifty yards without sitting down, and at the end of five weeks I could walk two or three miles at a stretch, taking it easily.

When I saw Lauder Brunton again after I got back he said he could not have believed such rapid improvement to be possible.

In October of this year my father bought for us a charming house in the Banbury Road, which we called Whirlow House after my grandfather's home in Yorkshire. I was by this time able to go back to part-time work at Ruskin, and in the following January I began work as usual. I was, however, not able to take any part in the general election of December 1910, but my wife did some speaking for Fiennes, who was this time successful.

One of the unfortunate results of my illness was that I had to abandon the violin. In the last few years I had played less and less as my work at the college increased. Lecturing and teaching involved a great strain on my memory, and I found the additional strain involved in learning music by heart was too much for me. I had little time for practising, and became depressed by the speed with which I lost what technique I possessed. After I strained my heart I had to be careful about avoiding over-exertion ; my work at Ruskin was still heavy, and the violin had to go. I finally sold it, and now have to content myself with a gramophone and the wireless.

X

1910 TO 1914

IN September 1909 my wife and I had been to our first Trade Union Congress, at Ipswich. This was an important congress from the point of view of Ruskin, for during the week a meeting was held to discuss the position of the college, which was attended by several trade union leaders. The Central Labour College people were there in full force, and we had a tremendous row, as they attacked the college with the greatest violence. They were replied to by David Shackleton in a magnificent speech, clearly stating the aims and objects of the college and vindicating the principles for which it stood. Our opponents, however, made one strong point—that the college was not under working-class control. In the early days the Governing Council had been formed by Vrooman, who asked various Labour leaders and university men to join it, but not in a representative capacity. Later on, when the trade unions became interested, those which gave scholarships were asked to send representatives to the council, but even then the council did not become a properly representative body.

As a result of the Ipswich meeting it was decided to take the question of the constitution in hand, and at the end of 1909 a meeting attended by a large number of delegates from Labour bodies was held in Oxford, at which a draft constitution was agreed to. Early in 1910 negotiations were opened with the Board of Trade, the college became 'a company not trading for profit', and the new constitution was adopted. Under it the Trade Union Congress, the General Federation of Trade Unions, the Co-operative Union, and the Working Men's Club and Institute Union had each two representatives on the council, and Labour organizations providing scholarships had the right to be represented. There were in addition to be three consultative members, without voting powers, selected

for their educational experience. The college was thus for the first time placed entirely under working-class control.

During 1910, owing to the departure of Charlie Buxton and Wilson and to my illness, coupled with the difficult financial position, lectures at the college were rather desultory and somewhat unsatisfactory. The students, however, began to go more and more to lectures in the university, and they worked well. But in September, Henry Allsopp was appointed Secretary and Vice-Principal, and the teaching began to improve. Allsopp was a Balliol man who had recently taken a First in History; he had a considerable knowledge of working-class life and of the Labour and Socialist Movements. He turned out to be an admirable teacher as well as a most business-like secretary, and he did much during the two years he was at the college towards an improvement of both its finances and the curriculum.

For some time I had been anxious that Ruskin students should become eligible to take the University Diploma in Economics and Political Science, and had been pressing for this on the Committee for Economics. It was therefore a great pleasure to me that in 1910 the committee decided to make this possible, and in June of that year two of our students went in for the examination, both obtaining the Diploma with Distinction. In the following year we sent in twelve students, all of whom obtained the Diploma, eight with Distinction. This was a great triumph for Ruskin, as, compared with the university candidates, our successes were proportionately much greater, especially with regard to the number of Distinctions. The standard was still rather low, but it was a great feat when it is remembered that our students were all working men who had left the elementary school at fourteen at the latest, and had only been studying two years at the college. Each year down to the outbreak of the war we sent in about twelve students, and we only had three ploughs in that time.

In the summer of 1911 we paid visits to the west of England. On the day we were returning home we began with a long drive across Dartmoor, to find on arriving at the station that the great railway strike of 1911 had been declared. We set off in the first train which came along, and for the greater part of

the day spent our frequent long halts in rather heated arguments with blackleg porters. By the time night came, however, we were, I am afraid, only too glad to remunerate anybody who would carry our bags for us, and when we at last arrived at Ascott somewhere near midnight, we had to wheel our luggage home in a barrow lent us by the stationmaster. We found a terrified household—my wife's old nurse 'Huntie' having worked herself almost into hysterics, imagining us heading a mob in Trafalgar Square!

During these years changes took place in the College Staff. Allsopp left at the end of 1912 to take up an appointment as H.M. Inspector; Sam Smith, a former student, became secretary, and Meadley, another ex-student, my assistant in the economic teaching. But we had no Vice-Principal until Easter, 1914, when Philip J. Baker¹ was appointed. He came fresh from a most brilliant Cambridge career, having won the highest distinctions in both the academic and athletic worlds. He was only a few months with us at the college, but his influence upon the students was remarkable. He for the first time managed to arouse in them a real interest in athletics, and he was also a stimulating teacher.

After Allsopp left, owing mainly to the inadequacy of our staff, the students went to more and more university lectures, and by 1914 they were going to far too many. In fact, they became quite dazed with lectures, and they suffered from the want of individual tuition. We gave them as much as was possible in the college, and we also received a good deal of help from university teachers, some of whom gave our students private tuition. Others allowed them to attend their seminars. Edgeworth and L. L. Price threw their seminars open to Ruskin men, while Arthur Heath of New College and Professor W. G. S. Adams, amongst others, took some of them privately. Some of the students took up French and German, and these studies were arranged by my wife, who did much of the teaching. In 1913 English Literature was added to the curriculum.

In spite of all this, however, the private tuition was inadequate, for students of the Ruskin type really require more

¹ Later Professor of International Relations in the University of London and Labour M.P. for Coventry.

individual attention than undergraduates, and it was surprising that the college did hold its own in these years and do pretty good work. In 1913 we invited an inspection by the Board of Education, and five inspectors came down to the college for a week and overhauled us very thoroughly. The result was a highly favourable report.

The relations between the college and the university were very friendly, and there was much coming and going between our men and undergraduates. The students were invited to take part in a Union debate once a term, and they were often asked to speak at college debates. Some of the critics of the college have maintained that contact with the undergraduates has been bad for Ruskin College students, that there is a danger of their aping the manners and less pleasing characteristics of the younger university men, and that they are liable to become prigs and to think themselves superior to the class from which they come. There is of course a danger that the weaker characters amongst the workers may be influenced for the worse by contact with some classes of undergraduates, but such men are liable to be a prey to bad influences wherever they are. As in other classes, so amongst the workers, the best men will be strong enough to avoid making contacts where no good is to be gained. As a matter of fact, we generally found that it was only the more serious undergraduates who came into close relations with our students, and this intercourse was wholly beneficial to all concerned. Our men as a rule were perhaps over-contemptuous of the more frivolous side of university life.

All through these years we continued our practice of having three or four students to our house every week, and they went from time to time to other houses in Oxford. Mrs. Caird, widow of Edward Caird, Master of Balliol, who must have been getting on for eighty at that time, used to invite little groups to spend the evening with her, and she always asked university people to meet them.

About 1911 the Ruskin College Fellowship was formed. This was a sort of union of old students, and its object was to keep its members in touch with one another and to enable them to make the college better known in the country. We then began

to have a yearly reunion of old students at Whitsuntide, when the annual meeting of the Fellowship was held, and on the Whit Monday my wife and I gave a garden-party, to which all the students past and present were invited, together with Oxford people who were sympathetic to the college. These garden-parties, I think, did a good deal to maintain friendly relations between the university and Ruskin, and to keep alive interest in our work. While most of the old students were put up at the college, one or two, with their wives and families, used to stay with us during these Whitsuntide reunions, and this kept us in close touch with many old friends from all parts of the country. Much of the time during these week-ends was spent in long discussions in our drawing-room or out in the garden—discussions which often lasted until well into the night. To these old students and their families we were no longer the tutor and his wife, but friends to whom they talked quite freely and whom they knew would be interested in hearing all they had to tell. In this way we gained a real insight into working-class life with all its difficulties and uncertainties, as well as into the many problems which were from time to time agitating the minds of the more thoughtful working people up and down the country. We felt very proud of their friendship and sometimes a little humbled that our friends should bear us no grudge for having so many of the good things of life which were denied to them. I remember a student with whom I once discussed this point saying to me : ‘ We don’t mind you having these things because we are fond of you, because you enjoy sharing them with other people. We don’t want you to have less, but we think we all ought to have more.’ Apart from these week-ends and the regular Saturday teas, however, the students were always coming and going between our house and the college. They liked to talk about their home affairs, and many of them told us that they often felt homesick and enjoyed getting away for a time from the college into an atmosphere of home life.

During these years we also paid several visits to the homes of old students, and very delightful visits they were. In 1912 we, with Phyllis Buxton—Charlie’s sister—spent a long week-end with John Lawson and his family in a mining village in

Durham. He and his family, as I have said, have always been very close friends of ours. I shall never forget the amount of talking we did during that week-end. Jack was anxious to introduce us to as many people as possible, and his house was crowded with friends and relations nearly all the time. On the Sunday I think we talked pretty well all day from ten in the morning until twelve at night! And much of it was good talk too; I learned all sorts of things about the conditions under which the Durham miners lived and worked which it would have been difficult for me to discover in any other way. I did not myself go down a mine, but my wife did, and she had the experience of hewing a piece of coal from the face, which she proudly kept for many years. We stayed with the Lawsons again in 1914, just before the news of the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia became known, and we went with them to the Durham Miners' Gala—a great annual function held at Durham. Thousands of miners poured into the city and, in a field just outside, an enormous meeting was held, which was addressed by Ramsay Macdonald. Although this was the Saturday before the Monday on which came the news of the ultimatum, there was not a hint of the possibility of war in the speeches, which were mainly on the Irish question and the lawlessness of some army officers and certain politicians.

We also stayed with an old student at Ashington, a largish town in Northumberland inhabited entirely by miners and the shopkeepers who provided for them. I remember there was hardly a conveyance of any kind to be hired in the place, our luggage (which was rather bulky, as we were away on a long holiday) being carried by our host from the station to his house. Another student with whose family we stayed was Arthur Ashby, since Professor of Agriculture in the University of Wales, one of the first agricultural workers who came to the college. His father had a small holding in Warwickshire, and we paid several very enjoyable visits to their farm-house.

Charlie Buxton, after his defeat at Woodbridge, worked for some months with his father, Sydney Buxton, who was then President of the Board of Trade. In the autumn of 1910 he set out on a six months' tour in the United States and Canada, and on his return decided to study agriculture, with a view to taking

a small holding in Sussex and working and living amongst the agricultural labourers there. He was very much interested in rural questions, and had several Socialistic experiments in mind. In this way he hoped to prepare himself to carry them out. He went to the Agricultural College at Wye for a course of study, and was on the point of beginning work on his small holding in August 1911 when he died as the result of an attack of appendicitis. His death, besides being a very great blow to my wife and myself, was, I feel sure, a great loss to the future of progressive movements generally, for he combined youthful enthusiasm with statesman-like qualities to a degree which I have never seen in any other young man of his age. As a friend once said of him: 'You can see the beacon behind the firebrand.' His death left an irreparable gap in one of the happiest families I have ever known. His relations with his father and his step-mother were very intimate; he had an almost romantic affection for his little half-brother and sister, while to his own sister, however occupied he was with work (and his life was a very full one), he wrote every day for years. He was only twenty-seven when he died. He left a legacy to the college, which made it possible, with the aid of other funds, to carry out the first half of a building scheme which had long been contemplated. The lecture hall, which is known as the Buxton Memorial Hall, and contains a beautiful bas-relief of Charlie, still keeps alive his memory in the college. His father, Sydney Buxton, felt he would like a memoir of Charlie, and to my great pleasure he asked me to write it. I did not get an opportunity of beginning it until the summer of 1913, but I then set to work, and the memoir was printed for private circulation in the June of the following year.

The foundation-stones of the new buildings were laid by Sydney Buxton, C. W. Bowerman, Miss Giles, and Mrs. Graffin (formerly Mrs. Vrooman) in February 1912, and the new buildings were opened early in the next year. Both ceremonies were largely attended by Labour leaders and members of the university, and at the laying of the foundation stones Ben Tillett delivered a speech on education which owing to its beauty and eloquence created a deep impression not confined to those who heard him. We were not able to be at the foundatio-

ceremony, as my father had died a few days before it took place. I was present at the opening of the new buildings, but my wife, owing to illness, was unfortunately unable to be there. This was particularly disappointing to her, as she had a short time before this formed a dramatic society amongst the students, and in the evening after the opening ceremony they gave a most successful performance of Galsworthy's *Strife*, in which she had been going to take one of the principal parts.

During these years we both took a fairly active part in politics. My wife joined the Women's Liberal Federation, and became the President of the Oxford South Ward Branch. She did a certain amount of speaking, and took part in various Liberal conferences in different parts of the country. We founded a branch of the Gladstone League at Ascott, and I did a good deal of speaking and lecturing for the League of Young Liberals in Oxford, principally on the Health Insurance Bill, in which I became keenly interested.

We spent a great deal of time at Ascott, and in 1913 were there nearly all the summer, I going backwards and forwards by train to Oxford. In 1911 we made friends with R. J. E. Tiddy, a Fellow of Trinity, who had a cottage at Ascott. He took a great interest in the village and the village people, and was one of the leaders in the revival of folk-dancing and folk-song which took place about that time. He taught the villagers folk-dancing, which became extremely popular, and subsequently bought a small piece of land and built a village hall for the use of the people. There was folk-dancing out of doors during the summer, and weekly dances took place in the hall throughout the winter for many years to come. In fact, folk-dancing still flourishes at Ascott. It has undoubtedly been a great resource and recreation to the people, and has done much to promote social intercourse and to break down the aloofness and lack of fellowship which is so common a feature of village life. Tiddy was extremely fond of music, and he used to have the village boys to his cottage and play to them on his pianola, with a view to testing their appreciation of different kinds of music. I remember him telling us that after playing pieces by a number of different composers many of the boys would always pick out

Bach as what they liked best. His were tunes they could get hold of, they said.

In 1913 my wife, who had met Margaret McMillan and had become much interested in her work, started a school clinic at Ascott—one of the earliest experiments of the kind in a rural area—and Margaret McMillan came down to open it. It was, however, strongly opposed by the vicar, who for some reason regarded it as Socialistic, but after a little hesitation it soon became very popular with the mothers and with the village generally. One rather curious fact came to light in the course of the dental work. Nearly all the teeth of nearly all the children were found to be in a very bad state, except those of one family. On inquiry it was found that this family was of gipsy origin; the tooth-brush was unknown among them, but they had been brought up largely on hard crusts and apples.

The vicar disliked all our activities at Ascott. He was a nice, kindly man, but had curious ideas not only about Socialism but as to what was due to his position. With regard to this he sometimes had an unfortunate way of expressing himself. I remember being told the following anecdote of him by the woman who kept the village shop. 'Mr. H. was in here the other day,' she said, 'and I said to him "I wish Mrs. H. wouldn't stop people in the village when she doesn't know them and begin talking to them and asking them questions. I had some friends staying with me the other day, and they complained that a woman had——"' Then before I could get any further Mr. H. said, "Stop, stop, Mrs. J.; Mrs. H. is not a *woman*, she is a *lady*.'"

We had always been interested in the Workers' Educational Association, which was founded by Albert Mansbridge in 1903, but being so much occupied with other work we did not come into close touch with it until 1911, when we decided to form a branch at Ascott. We got Mansbridge to come down and address a meeting which we arranged and which was well attended. Mansbridge spoke for the best part of an hour, and at the end of that time he invited questions and discussion. But the request was greeted with dead silence. He then asked if there was any subject that any one in the room would like to study. After another long silence a nervous youth said in a

very hesitating voice : ' I think I'd rather like to study shorthand.' ' That's splendid ! ' said Mansbridge. ' Now we can go ahead ', and in the course of the next twenty minutes he had persuaded everybody in the room that the one thing in the world they wanted to study was Industrial History ! It was a wonderful feat, which few but Albert Mansbridge could have performed. This has become a well-known W.E.A. story, but I cannot refrain from reproducing it. After this the Ascott-under-Wychwood Branch was soon established, and it is, I think, the oldest village branch in the country. We began with a mixed class for men and women, but to this was soon added a women's class, which met fortnightly in the afternoons. The women's class was taken by my wife for a year or two. There have been classes in the village ever since, and in most years both a mixed class and a women's class. We of course helped to set the branch on foot, but since quite early days the village people have managed it entirely for themselves, and the W.E.A. has done much here, as in other places, in the way of training working people to manage their own affairs. Before the War the branch used to arrange annual fêtes, and I well remember one occasion on which the fête was turned into some thing very like an old Harvest Home. The Mansbridges came down for it, and we all danced up the village, I playing my violin, and finally the whole village settled down to a large tea in an old barn. Then came an address by Mansbridge, and we finished up with the singing of old folk-songs.

My father, as I have said, died in 1912. After I went to Ruskin my holidays of course became shorter than formerly, but nevertheless we spent as much time as possible at Higham. My father had become quite reconciled to my being at Ruskin, and had by now realized that I was fully capable of planning out my life for myself. In fact, I think he was rather proud to find that I could stand on my own feet. He often stayed with us in Oxford, came to the college, talked to the men, and sat through several of my lectures, expressing the greatest delight at my performance. He of course never agreed with my political views, but treated them with the greatest tolerance, and I was always able to discuss them freely with him. He was

in fact extraordinarily broad-minded. I remember that when we first married my wife and I agreed that she had better not smoke at Higham, as my father strongly disapproved of women smoking. One day, however, being a little suspicious on the subject, he asked her whether she did smoke, and when she said : ' Yes ' he said : ' I thought so ', and produced a box of cigarettes, saying : ' You can have these on the condition that you smoke them with me ! ' Four years before he died he was attacked with diabetes. Though always a very temperate man, he was fond of good living, and diabetes of course meant that he was cut off from all the things he liked most. However, he took it with extraordinary cheerfulness, and remained happy and serene until, at the age of seventy-eight, his death came quite suddenly as the effect of a chill caught from driving for two hours in an open carriage on an icy winter day.

His death left us considerably better off financially, and we inherited all the Higham property. My father had at one time been anxious that we should live altogether at Higham, but he quite saw that this would mean giving up my work in Oxford, and by this time he understood that I was not cut out for the life of a country squire. After his death we did consider the possibility of keeping the house and spending our holidays there, but the neighbourhood did not attract us, and we had become very much attached to Ascott. We therefore let Higham House, but paid occasional visits to the village and were on the best possible terms with all our tenants. I was fortunate in having as tenant of my principal farm a man who was well liked in the village, and he acted as a kind of steward for me, looking after the interests of the villagers and keeping me in touch with all their needs.

In 1913 we decided to divide our time in the future between Oxford and the Cotswolds and to build a house of our own at Ascott. The new house we called Chesnut Close, this being the traditional name of the field in which it was built. It was an almost exact copy of a Tudor Cotswold manor-house. It was built of Cotswold stone dug out of a field adjoining the house, and was roofed with Stonesfield slates. The planning of it and the arrangements for the building were a great

interest to us, but had I known what lay ahead of us I should never have embarked on such an enterprise. We got into Chesnut Close in 1914, just a month before the outbreak of the War.

Soon after the death of my elder sister May in 1906 my father had founded in her memory a small holiday home for women and girls which was known as the May Home of Rest. He had a house at Higham eminently suited to the purpose, and the superintending of the home and the welfare of its visitors became one of his most absorbing occupations in the last few years of his life. Every morning saw him at the home, characteristically discussing with the matron all the details of its management, and talking to the visitors. My wife had always helped him a good deal with the home. He consulted her about everything, and when we were at Higham she of course had to accompany him on his morning visits. When he died he left the home in her charge. But we soon found that it was impossible so far from Oxford to look after it as he would have wished, and at the end of 1912 we decided to move it nearer to Oxford. We established it at first in a house we rented from Lord Aldenham at Clifton Hampden, but in 1914 we moved it to Stone End at Ascott, which we continued to rent for the purpose. My wife was fortunate enough to persuade an old friend of hers—Miss Ethel Smith, who was a nurse at the London Hospital—to come and undertake the duties of matron, and owing to her skill in management and her sympathetic personality the May Home became a source of rest and happiness to many overworked women. Unfortunately she was not there long, as she was called away to take her share in War work, but she had established a good tradition which was carried on by others. We kept the home at Stone End until 1922, when we left Chesnut Close. About that time a home had been founded in memory of Mary Macarthur, who died in 1920. The Mary Macarthur Home at Ongar, Essex, being a home of the same nature as the May Home, we decided to give the furniture of our Home to Ongar and to endow some beds, which are still known as the 'May Furniss' beds. This seemed to us the best way to help in the establishment of the Mary Macarthur Home, in which

we were much interested, and at the same time to ensure that my father's purpose would still be carried out. After the War we, like many other people, were much less well off than formerly, and, apart from this, our very strenuous work at Ruskin made it impossible then for my wife to give the home her personal supervision.

In the spring of 1914 we had our first experience of a strike, for I have never regarded the Ruskin affair as a strike in the true sense of the word. There was a small clothing manufactory at Chipping Norton, a little town in the Cotswolds, seventeen miles from Oxford, where the workers, a large proportion of whom were women, were very badly paid. The Workers' Union had become active in the neighbourhood, and it was joined by a large number of these factory workers. The employers objected, and almost the whole body came out on strike for recognition of the union. The strikers came to Ruskin to ask for help and sympathy, and my wife and I and a large number of students threw ourselves whole-heartedly into the struggle. We went over to Chipping Norton and did our best to encourage the strikers, speaking at their meetings and joining in their processions. The Ruskin College Dramatic Society had just been giving a performance of Galsworthy's *Silver Box* at the college, which my wife produced and in which she acted, and the play was given at Chipping Norton with the double object of raising funds and keeping the strikers amused. The strike lasted for weeks, and a good deal of sympathy was aroused by an incident which took place towards its end. An old woman got hustled in a crowd, and owing to some extraordinary mistake was arrested on a charge of assaulting a blackleg. She was sentenced to a fortnight's imprisonment. Her release was the signal for a tremendous demonstration in Chipping Norton, and it looked for the moment as if we were going to be triumphant. However, the strike gradually fizzled out, as these strikes amongst poor and badly-organized workers generally do; the men and women slowly drifted back to the factory, the strike pay being barely sufficient for existence. Technically I suppose the employers won, but I do not think there were any more objections raised against membership of the union.

In the January of 1914 we had an addition to our household. My wife had become interested in a family who had gone through a very sad experience, and one day returned from London, where she had gone to see them, with a small girl, Vera Sandles, whom we afterwards adopted as our niece.

XI

ECONOMICS AND POLITICS

I AM now going to make a digression from the chronological order of these memoirs. I want to say something of the influences which gradually brought about a complete alteration in my outlook on the economic and political questions of the day, and in fact upon my whole view of life—influences which gradually changed me from a pronounced individualist into a convinced Socialist. For the last few years we had both been moving more rapidly in the direction of Socialism than we perhaps realized. My wife had been greatly moved by a speech made by Philip Snowden at the Oxford Union—so much so that in 1913 she felt herself obliged to give up her work for the Women's Liberal Federation and to leave the Liberal Party. I was slower in changing my position. For some time I hesitated to throw in my lot with the Socialists, fearing the effect of some of the changes they recommended. I thought then that it was important to preserve unfettered incentives to individual enterprise, and believed it was best to let producers go ahead and accumulate wealth as fast as they liked, though I held that this should be heavily taxed for the benefit of the less fortunate classes and for the carrying out of various measures of social reform. I was therefore in favour of greatly-increased direct taxation, and particularly of a drastic reform of the Death Duties. I remember just before the War being thought almost mad by some of my friends for advocating an income-tax of half a crown in the pound! What I failed to see in those days was that so long as the bulk of the wealth of the country was allowed to remain in the hands of a small minority of the nation anything like a reasonably just distribution of income was impossible, and that so long as the means of production remained uncontrolled in the hands of the few, there could be no possibility of freedom or independence for the many.

Charlie Buxton himself, and more particularly the work I did

in connexion with the writing of his memoir, had a great influence upon the development of my ideas on social and economic questions. Charlie, while at the college, was constantly wavering between Radicalism and Socialism, but he finally came down definitely on the side of Socialism. He kept a very full diary for many years and was a great letter-writer. I, of course, had to read these diaries, and was lent many of the letters he had written to friends. In this way I was able to get a fairly clear idea of the lines along which his mind had moved, and his reflections on social and economic problems did much to confirm opinions at which I was gradually arriving.

I had also now been for seven years in almost daily contact with working men drawn from all parts of the country and from a great variety of industries. They were almost all thoroughly dissatisfied with the conditions under which they lived and worked. They were out against what (for want of a better name) is known as capitalism or the capitalist system, and some of them had good constructive notions as to the system which ought to take its place. Many of their ideas were of course very crude, and some of the men were ready for an immediate and violent revolution, thinking that capitalism could be overthrown in a day and Socialism established in a week. But on the whole the more thoughtful men amongst my students had a reasoned view as to the evils of capitalism and as to the possibilities of change. While they were thoroughly discontented with their position, they rarely spoke with bitterness of their employers. They did not hate their employers; in fact, they were often on quite friendly terms with them. They hated capitalism, not capitalists. Nor did they long to be rich men or to live like the wealthier classes. They wanted better wages, of course, but what they were much more anxious about was security, the ever-present possibility of unemployment being a perfect nightmare to them. They wanted better houses, more leisure, and generally a chance of a fuller and freer life, better opportunities for their children than they themselves had had, and more control over the industries in which they worked. There were of course some amongst the students who were anxious to get out of the working classes altogether, and this was hardly surprising. Not a few were anxious to escape

from manual labour, and soon after the establishment of Labour Exchanges several did obtain positions in the exchanges, where they did well. Other Ruskin College students have also done good work as teachers in the W.E.A. or in other movements. Two became university professors. Most of the men, however, preferred to remain members of the working class ; many of them were proud of being working men, and some really enjoyed and were interested in their work. I even remember an iron-moulder, who was engaged in very hard and very heavy work carried on in great heat, telling me that he enjoyed it and was anxious to get back to his job ! This, however, was certainly very unusual amongst iron-moulders. Many of the students of course complained of the monotony of their work, but more often of the conditions under which it was carried on, the bullyings of foremen, the irritating and unnecessary regulations and the interference with initiative to which they were subjected. They often talked to me about their lives and their work, and I became very intimate with many of them. They were constantly discussing Socialism with me, and their essays on Economics were full of criticisms of capitalism, suggestions for its overthrow, and schemes for replacing it. In fact, I had to spend much time in my correction of essays in pointing out the irrelevance to the subject set of a good deal that was introduced. At first from conviction, and later, for the sake of argument and criticism, I defended capitalism, so I had to have a fairly wide knowledge with regard to what could be said in its defence. In the long run, however, I felt that the students did get the better of the argument, and I became convinced that the case against capitalism was overwhelming. I never ceased, however, to teach them to understand the workings of the system they criticized.

It was by no means through ignorance of the social and industrial system under which we live that I was led to Socialism. I had read much history, and was fully alive to the material progress that had taken place during the nineteenth century under a capitalist system. I knew something of industry from the business man's point of view, and I knew how the well-to-do lived. I knew it could be argued that the improvement which had taken place in the position of the

working classes during the last hundred years pointed to further progress in the future by working along well-tried lines. On the other hand, I knew highly intelligent people who did realize many of the evils of the capitalist system, but who believed them to be for the most part unavoidable, honestly thinking that most of the changes advocated by Socialism were, if not wholly undesirable, altogether Utopian and impracticable.

I knew all this, but, notwithstanding, what I had learned from my students of working-class life and working-class thought convinced me of the necessity for far-reaching changes. I realized how much the enterprise of capitalists had done in the past towards the building up of material prosperity all over the world, but I also realized that enterprise was often misplaced, doing more harm than good, and that where it was most needed it was often non-existent. For example, there was plenty of enterprise in the production of quite superfluous and even harmful luxuries, but little in the housing of the people on whom the nation ultimately depended for its subsistence. Again, in spite of all the talk about enterprise, the dependent condition of the workers made enterprise for them almost an impossibility.

What I think weighed with me very much was the position of the working men and women I knew compared with that of my more well-to-do friends. Amongst my students were men of really fine intellect who possessed not only great capacity, but great moral force—men who, had they had the opportunities given to some of the more fortunate young men of my acquaintance, could hardly have failed to fill important positions in the life of the nation. These men, however, apart from some fortunate chance, were doomed to live in very uncomfortable surroundings and to work year after year for long hours under disagreeable conditions, earning at most two pounds a week (for the pre-War wages of even skilled men rarely averaged even as much as this throughout the year). To provide adequately for old age was impossible, and it was difficult to make any provision at all which had not to be at the expense of the children. Working men had, at this time, little hope of giving their children a better start in life than they themselves had had, for as far as they could see their children would

leave school at fourteen or younger and be swept into the industrial machine to lead much the same lives as themselves.

On the opposite side of the picture were the young men of the other classes, to whom all the more agreeable and more remunerative occupations were open, and who were beginning the serious part of their education just at the age when the vast majority of the children of the country were going to work. Why, I began to ask myself, should the sons and daughters of the few well-to-do have so much and the children of the workers so little? It was obviously not due to difference in ability or moral worth.

I began to realize that the denial of secondary and university education to the great mass of the people involved an enormous material waste. In recent years there has been some improvement in this respect, but the waste is still great. If you only educate a small section of the population after the age of fourteen and send the great majority to manual work you can never be sure that you are getting the right men in the right positions.

Charlie Buxton, as I have said, influenced me considerably in the direction of Socialism; the knowledge I gained of the working class through my students influenced me still more. But it was my re-reading of Economics in the light of the new facts I had learned during these years that did most in the way of changing my views. Charlie often used to say that there was quite enough in Marshall to make him a Socialist without worrying about Marx. I used to argue this with him, but later I came to the conclusion that he was right. There are some who reach Socialism through Christianity, and there are others who have accepted it mainly on ethical grounds. But I have always regarded Socialism on the whole as an economic question. I do not think that capitalism is in itself wicked, though it often leads to great cruelty and much hardship. I regard it as a bad economic system, but inexpedient rather than immoral.

Of the books I read, Chiozza Money's *Riches and Poverty* had a great effect upon my mind. It is no doubt possible to pick holes in his statistics, but the book for the first time gave me a clear idea of the tremendous inequality involved in our industrial system and of the terrible results that follow from that

inequality. I spent much time in the study of theories of production and theories of distribution, and found that practically all the instruments of production, including the land, had become the property of a small section of the community, which decided what should be produced and how it should be produced. Enormous improvements had been made in production through the development of machinery, and cheaper goods had certainly been the result in many cases. But the main benefits of machinery had been reaped by the employing class in the form of profits, while machinery had done little if anything to improve the lot of the workers as producers. It had often had the effect of making their work more monotonous and disagreeable.

I began to see that the primary motive of industry was not public service or a desire to supply the best and cheapest commodities, but rather to create the largest possible amount of profit. Of course, in the effort to obtain profit, producers were obliged to supply the customer with the things he required, at any rate to a large extent. But this is not the primary motive of industry, and production which is unprofitable is not undertaken by private employers (however essential it may be to the welfare of the community), while goods are produced which may be harmful or superfluous if there is profit in so doing.

From my study of distribution I learned that the economic rent of land is a surplus due in no way to the efforts of man, and yet I saw it going into the pockets of landlords who contributed no corresponding services to the nation. With regard to profits, there was more than one theory. Profits, it was said, were a surplus due to some form of monopoly. Or profits were said to be the reward of uncertainty-bearing or a payment for risk-taking. Again, it was maintained that profits were a form of interest and hardly distinguishable from it, interest being defined as a payment for waiting.

It did not seem to matter very much whether profits were a surplus or pure interest. The point which did matter to me was that such a large amount of the national income should be received by shareholders who for the most part knew nothing whatever about the industries from which they derived their wealth and who had contributed no corresponding service in

return. It is of course often urged that shareholders render a very great service to industry by lending their capital, without which industry could not be carried on, and this is true. But there can be, to take only one example, no comparison between the sacrifice involved in lending capital for the working of a colliery and the lifelong labours of the miners underground. After all, what is the sacrifice involved by waiting—for which such heavy payments are expected? It is generally nothing more than the sacrifice involved by deciding not to live on one's capital.

The economists, I found, were even more vague with regard to theories of wages than they were about profits, and the best writers seemed to have come to the conclusion that there is no one theory of wages. But it seemed to be pretty generally believed that the wages a man received tended to equal the value of what he produced. It is easy to see that it is quite impossible to discover exactly what any one man produces when he is but a minute unit in a huge industrial machine, and when the product is the result of the co-operation of numerous factors. If the amount which wage-earners contribute to production cannot be discovered, how can the value of their product be ascertained? And even if it could, would the value of the product of a workman be a just basis on which to determine his wages? Value is subject to changes from all sorts of causes, and it is quite possible for the value of products to fall without any diminution in the labour involved in their production—even when the labour involved has increased. It might be more just to give labour what it actually does produce, but this would of course be quite impracticable, even if the product due to each individual could be ascertained.

There are other standards which can be adopted for the payment of wages. Labour can be paid according to merit; but who is to be the judge of merit? It can be paid according to the amount spent on training, but, strictly speaking, those who provide the training should be recouped rather than the trained. Again, labour can be paid according to skill. But this brought me to the question of needs; why should the skilled man be paid more than the unskilled? Apart from his tools and what was necessary to enable him to do his work well,

it seemed that the needs of the skilled worker were much the same as the needs of the unskilled.

My study of theories of wages, then, led me to the belief that the needs of the workers formed the only basis on which their income could reasonably be determined.

Having reached this conclusion I went farther, and began to consider the grounds upon which income generally should be distributed. From my study of Economics I learned that income came either from the ownership of property or from work. The workers were entitled to wages because they worked, and the property-owners were entitled to rent, interest, and profits because they rendered indispensable services to industry. I recognized that indispensable services were performed by property-owners, but, as I have already said, I became very sceptical as to the relation of the services to their rewards. Were there any good reasons why one man should need a larger income than another? I came to the conclusion that there were none, if allowance is made for the size of families and for what is necessary to enable a man to do his work well. Bernard Shaw has long preached the absolutely equal distribution of income, and he would give to the baby in arms the same income as the Prime Minister or the manager of a large business. This is of course impracticable unless the apparatus of work is taken into consideration.

I came to believe that distribution according to needs leads inevitably to equal distribution plus the apparatus of work, and taking into consideration the size of families and the ages of children. The apparatus of work would obviously vary from industry to industry, and a great deal as between industries and professions. The miner, for instance, would require little beyond a pick and a lamp, while the doctor would need a motor-car, a largish house, and costly scientific equipment. The student would require a library, and perhaps different though not necessarily more expensive food from the mechanic or agricultural labourer. And many other variations will suggest themselves. But if our more important industries are considered it will be found, given that the necessary plant and machinery are installed, that the needs of the workers with regard to the apparatus of their work do not vary very much.

As far as I can see, the men and women who are working in these industries need pretty much the same as regards the essentials of life—housing, clothing, food, and warmth. They need much the same amount of leisure and much the same amount of amusement, though their recreations of course would vary in character.

Equal distribution of income with the qualifications I have suggested would of course mean that all would have to work ; but why not ? It is surely unfair for any one to dip his hand into the common pot without having helped to fill it. Such a change would mean that the managers of industry would have to work on a salaried basis, and that the incentive of profits would have disappeared. But this is essential to Socialism, for the fundamental change which is desired by Socialists is a change in the motive of industry, the substitution of the motive of public service for the motive of private gain. It is said that without the incentive of profit industry would not be carried on ; but I do not believe this. There may be some who would not exert themselves without the expectation of acquiring great wealth, but I doubt very much if the profit-making motive is so deep-rooted in human nature and so widespread as is commonly believed. During the Great War (even though we had our profiteers) enormous numbers of people were willing to make tremendous sacrifices and to perform exhausting work not only on active service but at home without any idea of material gain ; and leaving aside exceptional cases such as a war, how much good work is done in all sorts of spheres where the profit-making motive plays no part at all ? Take for example civil servants, the teaching and nursing professions, the clergy, scientists, and men engaged in research generally. It is surely not impossible that the idea of public service might in time cover the whole field of industry. There is nothing new in the conduct of business by men on a salaried basis ; most industries are now run by paid managers and other officials, and the great bulk of the profits of industry are taken by shareholders in the form of interest, not by those who actually do the work of production.

I am well aware that the views here set forth are very incompletely stated, but it has not been my intention to argue out

the whole case for Socialism. Socialists are often charged with having no constructive ideas, but if Socialism is regarded as an evolutionary process it cannot be said beforehand precisely what form the new society will take. A sudden change from industry run on a profit-making basis to industry carried on as public service is of course quite impossible. Nor can equality of income be established at a single blow. Most Socialists recognize all this, and they cannot do more than set before themselves certain definite goals towards which they propose to work. I came to believe that we must work for a change in the motive of industry, that the principal industries of the country must be gradually brought under social control, and that we must move towards equality of income. We are, as a matter of fact, moving very slowly, but surely, in these directions.

Up to the outbreak of the War I was still a member of the Liberal Party, though a somewhat half-hearted one. My reflections on Socialism had taught me that no single country could advance by itself very far along the road to Socialism, and that there was an international side to the movement. Though it would be too much to say that the Liberal Party brought us into the War, they were in office at its outbreak, and they did deliberately conceal from the country the obligations we were under with regard to France. I could not help feeling that the Liberals were too much bound up with the old diplomacy to make it possible for them to establish far-reaching changes in international relations. In spite of the break-up of the Socialist International, I became convinced that the British Labour Party had the finest ideals with regard to the relations which ought to exist between nations, and by the end of 1914 I was a Socialist.

However, my wife and I did not join the Labour Party until later. Before 1918 it was impossible to join unless you belonged to a trade union or were a member of the Fabian Society or of the Independent Labour Party. I was not a trade unionist in those days, though I afterwards joined the National League of the Blind. But for the War we should probably have joined the Fabian Society or the I.L.P., or perhaps both. As it was, the War turned our thoughts in other

directions, and though we took what opportunities arose of working for the Labour Party during the War, we did not actually become members until the beginning of 1918, when, under the new constitution, individual members were admitted.

XII

WAR YEARS—I

IN July and August 1914 the Oxford W.E.A. Summer School was held—the fifth of its kind. These summer schools are carried out under the auspices of the Oxford Joint Committee, and were the outcome of the establishment of University Tutorial Classes. The first class was started at Longton, Staffs, in 1908 ; by 1914 other universities besides Oxford had set up joint committees, and the number of classes had increased considerably. The joint committees as a rule consisted of fourteen members, seven representing the university and seven the Workers' Educational Association. Members of tutorial classes were pledged to a three years' course of study, involving twenty-four class meetings during the year, with written work, and a high standard was expected and attained. It was soon found desirable to bring students from these classes to Oxford in the Long Vacation for a more intensive course. The women stayed in lodgings, while the men lived in college, generally in Balliol, and they learned much from the community life into which they were thrown, as well as from the lectures and tuition.

In 1914 my wife and I came into touch with the summer school for the first time, largely owing to our having become intimate with E. S. Cartwright, who had come to Oxford in 1912 as Organizing Secretary of the Oxford Joint Committee. He and his family spent a good deal of time off and on with us at Ascott during the summer and autumn, and a very close and intimate friendship grew up between us. I do not think I actually taught at this summer school, but I went to some of the lectures and social evenings, and met a good many of the students.

On the eve of the declaration of war we were present at a lecture given by Edgar Schuster on some question of Eugenics, but I am afraid the lecture did not receive the attention it

deserved. A sense of foreboding filled the air. Inside in the brilliantly lighted room the lecturer was dealing scientifically with a difficult subject, while through the open windows came the measured tramp of feet in the hot August night. Soldiers were pouring into Balliol to bivouac in the hall on the way to join their various units. After the lecture I had, as Slater was away, to go round to Ruskin to interview the college porter, who had been called up, and to make arrangements for his leaving. I never saw him again.

On the declaration of war a great discussion naturally took place as to whether the summer school should be abandoned, but it was decided—very wisely, I think—to carry on. It was also at once determined, largely by the students themselves, that they should put aside the history, economics, and other subjects they were studying, and turn their attention to the causes of the War, international questions, and modern European history, the last two being subjects which had been too much neglected in the past by working-class students. This decision was of the utmost importance to the future of the adult educational movement, and but for it I believe the W.E.A. might possibly have broken up. As it was, the summer school students went back to the districts from which they came imbued with the idea that it was essential for the workers of the country to acquire more knowledge of international problems. The study of international questions was very much stimulated by the foundation about this time of the Council for the Study of International Relations, in which several leading W.E.A. tutors had a hand, notably A. E. Zimmern¹, Henry Clay², and Arthur Greenwood³.

It may be thought that the determination to keep the W.E.A. alive at all costs was somewhat unpatriotic, and that the workers should have been thinking of nothing but the prosecution of the War. It must, however, be borne in mind that there were the women to be considered and the men who were too old or unfit for military service, and also that in the early

¹ Afterwards Professor of International Relations at Oxford, 1930.

² Later Professor of Social Economics, University of Manchester; Economic Advisor in the Securities Management Trust, Bank of England, 1930.

³ Afterwards Minister of Health in the Labour Government, 1929.

days there was no talk of calling up everybody even amongst the younger men. Again, few people except Lord Kitchener believed that the War would last four years, while the majority imagined that it would probably be over in six months at the latest. There can be no doubt of the fact that the carrying on of the W.E.A. all through the War and the interest which was aroused in studies which had hitherto been neglected had far-reaching effects on the future of the educational movement.

In September it was decided not to reopen Ruskin College for residential students in the coming term, but that the correspondence work should be continued; the staff was temporarily disbanded with the exception of Slater and Sam Smith, the secretary, who were unfit for war service. They attended to the business of the college and dealt with the diminishing number of essays which came in from the corresponding students. Philip Baker set to work and formed the Friends' Ambulance Unit, and was in France by the end of October; he did magnificent work there and, later on, in Italy. Meadley found work as an engineer on a merchant ship, and met his death by drowning when his ship was torpedoed in 1916. Miss Giles died early in 1915. The college buildings were lent for a time to the Belgian refugees, and my house in Oxford was used for the same purpose. A large Belgian family arrived at Whirlow House, the father being a big wine merchant. They had lost most of their possessions on the way over, but this they took calmly. The final blow came when a telegram arrived while I was with them announcing that all the wine had been seized by the Germans. On the receipt of this news the whole family burst into tears! I consoled them with a few bottles of wine I had in the house, an act which had the effect of producing more tears—this time of gratitude.

We spent the greater part of the first year of the War at our new house Chesnut Close at Ascott-under-Wychwood. For the first few months I took things easily. Since my illness in 1910 I had never been as strong as formerly. I was very tired after a long spell of work, and was glad of the rest from teaching. I was, like every one else, terribly worried and depressed by the War, and had all the time an uncomfortable feeling that I ought to be doing something to help, but not knowing quite what I

could do. I also hesitated to embark on other work, thinking that the War would soon be over and that I should be wanted again at the college. My wife was more fortunate than myself with regard to War work, as she soon found plenty to do in connexion with the Oxford Soldiers and Sailors Families' Care Committee, the body which before separation allowances were introduced did most of the necessary work with regard to the wives and children of those who were serving. She went into Oxford almost every day all through the winter, and also gave a course of lectures to the Ascott women's W.E.A. class.

Early in the autumn I decided to fill up the time until the college should reopen by putting together some of my new ideas upon economic matters in the form of a book, which I entitled *Economic Doubts*. I wrote a considerable part of this book, but never finished it. The writing of it, however, served to clear up my mind on many points. Apart from a good deal of reading, the only other economic work I did during this year consisted of a few reviews and a little help I gave Henry Clay, who asked me to read the MS. of his *Economics for the General Reader*. In the course of the year I gave a certain number of lectures in the villages in the Cotswolds and other parts of the country. One of these was at Jarrow, and to my surprise, although I am generally fairly audible, I was constantly asked to speak up. After this had happened three or four times, a man in the audience got up and said: 'We're nearly all boilermakers here, so we're most of us hard of hearing'—an unpleasant commentary on the results of work in one of our big industries.

In the spring of 1915 my wife and I went for a week to the Pottery district, where I had been asked to undertake a lecturing tour. This was a great experience, for the Five Towns may be described as the nursery of the tutorial classes, and we were astonished by the enthusiasm for education that we found there. The students of these classes had developed a strong missionary spirit; they had established classes amongst the miners in the country round, and many of them walked miles to mining villages on winter nights after a hard day's work to deliver lectures, and so to pass on the knowledge they themselves had

gained. I visited two or three of these places, and my lectures were followed by some of the best discussions I can remember. After many of my lectures we had to come back to our hotel by the well-known 'Loop Line', and we were always accompanied to the station by a group of eager students engaged in continuing the discussion begun in the lecture-room. Some of them would come with us in the train, and even follow us into the hotel, though it was quite out of their way home, in order to prolong the talk.

In the early summer we first came to know something of the leading Fabians, being taken to a big Fabian gathering at Barrow House, near Keswick, by our friend Mrs. Alys Russell. We met Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Bernard Shaw, the Raymond Unwins, Lowes Dickinson, Graham Wallas, Leonard Woolf, and others, and, as may be imagined, heard some excellent talk. The meeting was an important one. International questions were made the subject of discussion, and during this week a plan for a League of Nations was drawn up—the first as far as I know to be worked out elaborately and in detail. There were, however, some pauses in our highbrow activities. One afternoon a lot of us set out for a walk on the hills at the opposite side of the lake. On the way home we had tea in the garden of a little inn, where there were a good many other picnic parties doing the same thing. G. B. S. was at his very best—talking brilliantly and in his most sparkling mood, and I remember the people at the other tables edging their chairs nearer and nearer in order to listen to him. There was soon complete silence in the garden except at our table, and the other visitors must have wondered who the tall man with the red beard and blue eyes could be as they listened to talk the like of which they had probably never heard before. Another little incident of that afternoon stands out in my memory. As we were stepping off the boat after crossing the lake a very young man, who was known to some of us and who had just arrived to join the gathering at Barrow, came up. He immediately demanded to be introduced to Shaw, to whom he said in a most patronizing manner: 'I have been wanting to meet you for a long time, Mr. Shaw.' I shall never forget the tone of Shaw's voice as—not unkindly but with a note of

satirical amusement—he replied : ‘ And I, my dear —, have been living for this day ever since I saw the announcement of your birth in *The Times* ! ’ The weather was hot and lovely, and we spent most of the evenings sitting out in the garden of Barrow House listening to the Webbs, Shaw, and Graham Wallas talking on all sorts of subjects. It was a great experience for us, who had lived a somewhat isolated life in Oxford so far as the Labour Movement was concerned. This was the first time we had come into close contact with any of the leading intellectuals among the Socialists, and we have always felt most grateful to Sidney and Beatrice Webb, who received us—strangers—as if we were old friends, and who took so much trouble to make us feel absolutely at home in such new surroundings.

Gribble had joined the army in February, and I naturally felt his loss very much, for after so many years’ work with the same person it was not easy for me to adapt myself at once to a newcomer. However, I was fortunate in obtaining the help of Miss Ethel Archer. She was a beautiful reader and a good shorthand typist, and she very soon got into my ways. All through this year I was restless and dissatisfied with my life, feeling that I ought to be doing something more definite than the rather desultory work with which I was occupied. In the course of 1915 I realized that it would be impossible for the college to reopen for some time, and began to look about for what was called ‘ War work ’, or, failing this, to see if I could fill the place of some one who had left for active service. In August 1915 I consulted Mansbridge, who was then general secretary of the W.E.A., and he told me that the district secretary for what was then known as the South-Eastern District had decided to join up, and asked me to take his place. At the same time he asked my wife to become secretary of a new W.E.A. committee which had been set up, known as the War Time Comradeship Committee, its object being to keep W.E.A. members serving abroad in touch with what was going on at home. So we set off to work in an office in London, where, apart from one or two intervals, we remained until early in 1919.

The South-Eastern District included Oxon, Berks, Bucks,

Hampshire, and the Isle of Wight, Kent, Sussex, and the whole of Surrey except those parts which adjoined London. I was responsible for keeping in touch with the branches and classes which existed, for finding tutors and lecturers for them, for organizing new classes where asked for, for administering the work, including the finances, of the district generally, and for the business connected with the district council meetings. The work involved was not so enormous as it might appear from the size of the area which the district covered, for it was a new district in which as yet very few branches had been established. I think there were not more than twenty when I first took over the secretaryship. But a good deal of office work was involved as well as a considerable amount of travelling, with some lecturing and speaking.

During the year and a half in which I was district secretary I visited most of the existing branches and established several new ones. The new branches were mostly in Kent, and some of those set on foot have since developed into flourishing University Tutorial Classes under the Oxford Joint Committee. A few branches were formed in Sussex and a good beginning was made in Hampshire. I kept going all the existing classes in Oxon, Berks, and Bucks, and some new centres were formed. In Surrey I did not make very much progress. The starting of a branch or class generally meant that I had to travel to the place in question and make a speech on the W.E.A. I also gave occasional lectures myself to classes. This meant a good deal of work, and the travelling about to out-of-the-way places in the winter under war conditions was no light matter. We had had a car before the War, but this had gone out to France in very early days, and I had to make use of what trains there were. It was not altogether an easy life for Miss Archer, who often had to go with me on these expeditions about the country, when my wife was prevented by her work from accompanying me. I shall never forget the skill with which Miss Archer piloted me about London and in and out of tubes and buses in those days, for I was getting gradually blinder all the time and needed more and more piloting.

I knew little of administrative or committee work when I first took over my office, but the experience I gained in these matters

was exceedingly valuable and was of the utmost use to me in later days when I went back to Ruskin College. As district secretary I had to attend the meetings of the Central Executive Committee of the W.E.A., and I was appointed a member of a sub-committee which was set up to consider the whole question of educational policy. The sub-committee sat constantly during several months, and we drew up a long memorandum which amounted to a statement of W.E.A. policy with regard to the national system of education, dealing with education from the nursery school to the university. This was in some ways a new departure for the W.E.A.; the association had hitherto confined itself in the main to organizing classes or helping other educational bodies to do so. Now it became definitely propagandist for educational reform. The memorandum was adopted by the Executive and Central Council, and became a sort of W.E.A. charter of educational reform. It undoubtedly had a considerable effect in shaping the educational policy of the country and especially upon the Education Act of 1918. In addition to my work as district secretary I wrote some W.E.A. pamphlets and contributed a series of articles on elementary economics to *The Highway*, the organ of the association.

Early in 1916 Mansbridge suggested the preparation of a book of essays by some of the W.E.A. tutors upon certain economic questions, and he asked me to select the writers and to act as editor. The result of this undertaking was *The Industrial Outlook*, published early in 1917. The preparation of the book was no easy matter. I had first to find the contributors—a difficult task when all the most capable people were already up to their eyes in work. However, I managed to get together a little group of very competent writers who were high authorities in their subjects. Then there was the difficulty of obtaining their contributions in reasonable time, to say nothing of the criticisms to which I was often obliged to subject their writings when I received them. I used to say at the time that I would rather write a book myself than edit one written by other people, but I think now that I only said this in my haste! The object of the book was first to state the pre-War position with regard to the problems discussed, and secondly

to make suggestions as to reconstruction after the War. I myself only contributed the introductory chapter. The book was favourably reviewed and had a considerable sale. It was widely read by the students of tutorial classes, and was still in use amongst them many years after its publication.

Another piece of work I undertook at this time, and which lay outside my duties as district secretary, was a second week's lecturing tour in the Pottery district, when my wife and I were most hospitably entertained by what was then known as the North Staffs Adult Education Movement (afterwards the North Staffs District of the W.E.A.). We met many old friends and made some new ones. In one of my lectures I discussed the question of reparations, pointing out the difficulties that might arise in the payment of reparations, the bad effects they were likely to have both on the countries which paid and the countries which received, and generally the unwisdom of insisting on large payments. I was scoffed at by some of my audience, and, as usual in the Potteries, became involved in a discussion during my journey home and after reaching my lodgings. After-events have proved me not so far wrong—a fact which is, I believe, still placed to my credit by some of my Pottery friends.

All through this time my wife was working hard as secretary of the War Time Comradeship Committee. She collected round her a little band of helpers, including Molly Pope, Miss Ollivant (another cousin), and Rachel Sanderson, a distant connexion of mine, who was acting as her secretary. The work involved a large amount of correspondence to soldiers and sailors serving abroad, or in hospitals at home. It was discovered that large numbers of the men serving abroad were extremely lonely and that they longed for letters, and many members of the W.E.A. all over the country undertook to 'adopt' a soldier or sailor as a correspondent. Large quantities of books were sent out to W.E.A. men in the trenches, and my wife and her helpers did a great deal in the way of visiting wounded members in hospital. Concerts and social evenings were arranged, so that men on leave could have a chance of meeting old friends and of keeping in touch with what was going on in the W.E.A. The arrangements made by

my wife with regard to correspondence were most popular, and led in more than one case to the marriage of the lady correspondent to the soldier with whom she corresponded! The work grew rapidly during the two years my wife was in charge. It occupied all her time, and I am sure had very valuable results, for there is no doubt that it helped to keep W.E.A. members together, and that it was largely responsible for the rapid extension of the movement which took place after the War. My wife, as representing the committee, attended the meetings of the Central Executive, and this helped to widen her knowledge of the association and its work.

I resigned the district secretaryship in the spring of 1917, other work having arisen which demanded my whole attention. But I was elected a member of the Oxford Joint Committee, and soon after became one of the elected members of the W.E.A. Central Executive, so that I was still in close touch with the movement. I have remained a member of the Joint Committee and of the National Executive ever since.

When we went up to London in 1915 it was a little difficult to decide where to live. Our servants had all gone off to do War work, so we left Chesnut Close in charge of our gardener and his wife. We were anxious not to be too far from our work, so we established ourselves in a small private hotel in Upper Montagu Street, Bloomsbury. We had not been there many days before we had our first real experience of war. We were just getting into bed when we heard a crash which sounded as if the whole British Museum had been smashed to atoms. We rushed downstairs to find a terrified crowd in the hall, and people from outside pouring in for shelter. Nobody in those days quite realized the danger, and we all went to the front door to see what was going on. My wife saw the great lighted ship sailing away over the house-tops, and fires springing up into the sky, but it was not until the next day that we heard of the damage the Zeppelin had done in Queen Square and the neighbourhood. We did not feel particularly frightened or tired, and the next day went down to Upton St. Leonards near Gloucester to spend the week-end with the Brewsters. When we got there, however, we found we were absolutely exhausted, and could do nothing but lie in the garden and

sleep. I think air-raids had much more effect on one's nerves than one imagined at the time, but we were to become much more accustomed to them later on. My brother-in-law, Arthur Brewster, had become an honorary canon of Gloucester in 1910, and in 1912 had been appointed to the rectory of Upton St. Leonards, a lovely village at the foot of Painswick Hill. The rectory was a delightful house with a beautiful garden, and we spent many happy days there during the War.

A great blow fell upon us in the summer of 1916 in the death of our friend Reggie Tiddy, who was killed in action in France. He had joined up owing to a very stern sense of duty, though quite unfitted for army life and so short-sighted that it was only after several unsuccessful attempts that he was accepted. However, he threw himself into his army life with the buoyant zest which was one of his most attractive characteristics, taught folk-dancing to the soldiers, and was adored by them. Perhaps only his most intimate friends knew how deeply he felt the horror of war and all it involved, and his long weekly letters, often full of gaiety as they were, revealed the misery through which his soul was passing. To us his death meant the loss of one of our most intimate friends, one who was in sympathy with all our ideals and who shared all our interests in Ascott and the Cotswolds.

XIII

WAR YEARS—II

DURING this time in London I had kept in touch with Ruskin College affairs, though there was little going on apart from the correspondence work. In October 1915 Slater resigned, having been appointed Professor of Economics in Madras University. Sam Smith was then the only member of the staff left, and he, as secretary, carried on such business as was necessary. A good deal of discussion arose as to whether it was or was not advisable to appoint a new principal. By some members of the Governing Council it was urged that a principal was not needed, as there was nothing much for him to do. Others took the view that an appointment ought to be made for the sake of the prestige of the college, and also in order to have some one responsible for preparing the ground for its reopening at the earliest possible moment. This latter point of view prevailed, and I was appointed principal, without salary, in April 1916.

I was much pleased, as I had all sorts of ideas for the future development of the college which I was anxious to put into practice, and my W.E.A. secretaryship had given me a taste for administrative and organizing work. There was not very much that could be done at the moment, and I was able to carry on my W.E.A. work for a year after my appointment as principal. But I paid frequent visits to Oxford in order to discuss the future of the college with Smith and others who were interested. I felt it to be most important that the college should be kept before the public eye, and that it should be looked upon not merely as a building where students were taught, but as a great educational idea, that even while the War was going on it could do useful work. With this object in view I decided to arrange a series of conferences for the discussion of questions connected with economic, social, and political reconstruction after the War.

It was determined to hold the first conference in Oxford. The Ruskin College buildings had by this time been handed over to the Government, and were used as a hostel for the nurses who were working at Somerville College, which had been turned into a hospital, but St. John's College kindly lent us their hall for the conference, which was held in July 1916. The subject chosen was 'The Reorganization of Industry'. Papers were contributed by Professor A. C. Pigou¹, Arthur Greenwood, Sidney Webb², and A. E. Zimmern. Each paper was followed by a long discussion, and the proceedings lasted two days. Delegates were sent from a large number of trade unions, co-operative societies, and other working-class bodies. The conference had at least one important result, for, from the discussion on one of the papers, arose the idea of a Whitley Council in the Post Office, which afterwards came into being. A full report of the proceedings was published in booklet form, entitled *The Reorganization of Industry*, and formed the first of a series brought out by the college under this title. The conference attracted a good deal of attention, and helped to make people realize that the college was still alive. The booklet sold well, seven thousand copies being disposed of in a very short time. A second conference was held at Bradford in March 1917, when the subject was 'Some Problems in Urban and Rural Industry'.

In the spring of 1917, after consulting many people in London and elsewhere, I persuaded the Governing Council of the College to allow me to arrange for a summer school at Oxford, for disabled soldiers. I learned that there were a good many men about up and down the country who were not fit to return to active service or to undertake any form of physical work, but who were quite well enough for some form of occupation and who might be glad of the opportunity of taking a course of study. Unfortunately, however, I had over-estimated the demand for a school of this kind, and I had so few applications from would-be students that the scheme had to be abandoned.

After the Bradford conference we moved to Ascott, with the

¹ Professor of Political Economy, Cambridge.

² Later Lord Passfield.

idea of making arrangements for the summer school from there, and when the school fell through we decided to stay on. We spent the summer between Oxford and Ascott, and in July and August I did a good deal of work for the Oxford Summer School, lecturing and taking classes. I also gave occasional lectures for the W.E.A. in various places. But my work in connexion with the college was increasing, as Sam Smith was called away on War work, so that I was left in sole charge. As a third conference at Birmingham had been decided upon, the whole of the preparations for this fell on me, and the work involved was considerable, especially as I had to contribute one of the papers myself. The subject chosen was 'Some Economic Aspects of International Relations', and my paper was on 'Commercial Policy and Our Food Supply'. After the conference I had to prepare the report for publication, so that altogether I was kept fairly well occupied for some time.

In 1917 I attended the Labour Party Conference at Manchester, the first of a long series of these conferences at which my wife and I have both been present. We went also in this year to the Trades Union Congress at Blackpool. My object in going to these meetings was partly to learn more about the Labour Party and the trade union movement, and partly in order to meet and get to know people in the movement and to arouse a more definite interest in Ruskin college amongst some of the political and industrial leaders. The co-operative movement had always been interested in the college, and we spent some Whitsuntide holidays at the annual Co-operative Congress. We had already met in London many of the principal people in the Labour Party, and we had made great friends with Marion Phillips¹, who was then secretary of the Women's Labour League, founded in 1906 by Mrs. Ramsay Macdonald, and bearing somewhat the same relationship to the Labour Party as that of the Women's Liberal Federation to the Liberal Party. In the summer of 1917, when Marion Phillips was staying with us at Ascott, she and my wife had many long talks on the housing question and on the possibilities of housing

¹ Afterwards Chief Woman Officer of the Labour Party, and M.P. for Sunderland.

reconstruction after the War. They both felt that in the planning of the new houses it was of the utmost importance that the opinion of the working women who were to occupy them should be ascertained, especially with regard to the interior arrangements. Marion Phillips conceived the idea of setting up a women's committee in connexion with the Women's Labour League to go into the whole question of housing, and asked my wife to become secretary of this committee. It was work which particularly appealed to her, and she agreed to undertake it. It meant of course living in London, so we settled into a flat in Great Russell Street in October 1917. Most of the night after we arrived we spent on the ground floor in a terrible Zeppelin raid—the one which wrecked Swan & Edgar's. It began about nine o'clock and went on until two-thirty in the morning. However, we managed to turn up at the wedding of one of my wife's cousins at Bisham Abbey by eleven o'clock that day.

My wife was anxious not entirely to drop her War Time Comradeship work, but by now it was all running very smoothly and did not occupy much of her time. She was able therefore for the next year to work almost entirely on the housing question. The committee decided to circularize all working women's organizations, sending out a very full questionnaire, the answers to which (amounting to some 15,000) had to be filed and classified. In addition to the office work involved by this my wife had to do a great deal of speaking and interviewing, and later she became one of the Labour representatives on the Women's Advisory Housing Council of the Ministry of Reconstruction. Her time was therefore very fully occupied.

Miss Archer had gone to work with E. S. Cartwright in Oxford, and her place with me was taken by Rennie Smith, an old Ruskin College student.¹ He was interned in Germany during the early part of the War, but had been released, largely through the help of a German who had been a fellow-student with him at the college, on the ground that he was a minister of religion. He was of course released on the condition that he took no part in the War.

¹ Afterwards Labour M.P. for the Penistone Division of Yorkshire.

Our life in London for the next year and a half was in some ways very enjoyable. We met a great many interesting people and made many friends, and we had plenty of work. The British Drama League was founded about this time, and I was a member of the original committee. A little later came the Arts League of Service, in the foundation of which my wife took a part, having always been much interested in the drama and welcoming with enthusiasm the idea of taking good plays to the country districts. But, on the other hand, life in some respects was a great strain. The neighbourhood of the British Museum was a part of London which always attracted the German aviators, and we suffered much from the air-raids, of course a common experience of Londoners at that time. I think we were in eleven raids altogether. We were never amongst those who made light of the danger and took no precautions; we preferred the ground floor, which was really the only tolerably safe place in a high, hollow block of flats. Sitting up at all hours of the night in the cold was very exhausting, to say nothing of the horror of the whole thing, for people were being killed in our near neighbourhood. I remember my brother-in-law, Charlie Nicholl, on leave from France, where he had seen much service, telling us of his terror when he experienced a London air-raid for the first time. He moved his family out of London the next day! Then, again, there was the food scarcity, with the rationing, which made life difficult, especially when you lost your ration card, as we did twice. For about a month early in 1918, before the rationing order, we really had not enough to eat, and I can remember that we more than once went to bed actually hungry. On one occasion during the time when meat was almost unobtainable we managed by some chance to get hold of a small pigeon, but as four friends accidentally dropped in to dinner it did not go far!

For many years before this time, and indeed for many years since, much of the comfort and happiness of our lives has been due to an Oxford family named Jones. The family contained a large number of daughters, and nearly all of them have lived with us at one time and another, performing between them almost every kind of domestic work in our house. One of

them had been our cook, but had married just before the War. Her husband being out at the front, we had the great good fortune of having her to look after us in our flat. She did everything for us, and with the utmost unselfishness was always trying to provide us with the comforts to which we were accustomed at home. I am sure it is largely owing to her that I only lost two stone during the war! Grace was extraordinarily successful in the little markets off Drury Lane, beguiling the storekeepers in the days before ration cards into giving her all sorts of odds and ends, which she would bring home and make into wonderful dishes. On these occasions we would ring up hungry friends, who hurried to the flat to share her spoils.

In the spring of 1918 I was occupied with preparations for another Ruskin College conference, which it had been decided to hold at Manchester in May. At the Manchester conference the relations of the State to industry were discussed, and I contributed the first paper (on 'The State and the Citizen'). I was also engaged in making arrangements for a Ruskin College Summer School to be held in the coming summer, which had grown out of a proposal made to me when I was in Oxford in 1917. In the spring of 1918 my wife and I carried out a lecturing tour for the W.E.A. in some of the Kent villages, where classes I had helped to establish when I was district secretary were doing good work. It was a pretty strenuous week. On one occasion I was lecturing at Ham Street in the afternoon and my wife at Folkestone; we met somewhere or other and were driven right across Romsey Marsh in the teeth of a bitter March wind to Wittersham, where, after a cup of tea, I had a lecture and discussion lasting two hours. We then returned to our host's house, where, after a long talk, we sat down at midnight to a boiled rabbit and cocoa! Another long talk followed the meal, and we did not get to bed until two. However, we were off again at seven o'clock the next morning.

In June 1918 I was called up for active service! I was not a very promising soldier—nearly fifty, and a good deal blinder than I had been even at the outbreak of the War. However, I went before the medical board and was examined by two

doctors for the best part of an hour. Whether they thought I was shamming or were merely interested in my eyes I never discovered ; but I had quite a good talk with them about Ruskin College. After much waiting about, I received three shillings and sixpence—a private's pay and ration allowance for one day, and a note to say that the King had no further need of my services. I celebrated the occasion, I remember, by spending part of my day's pay on some War-time beer. A little later it was discovered that I ought to have gone before a board in Oxford, and I received another summons. However, I went to see the officer in charge at Oxford and argued the point with him, and he agreed that it was not necessary to examine me again. So I was free to go on with my summer school.

While the Oxford W. E. A. Summer School was in progress the year before, the Workers' Union organizers happened to hold a meeting in Oxford for the discussion of matters connected with their union. Some of them got into touch with the summer school, and having become interested in its work it occurred to them that a school run on somewhat similar lines might be useful to their union ; a small group of organizers, headed by John Beard, President of the Workers' Union, came to see me, to ask if Ruskin College could arrange a school especially for their organizers. The Governing Council of the College thought well of the idea, and I was asked to make the necessary arrangements for the holding of a school in 1918. I had to find a place in which to house the school, as the Ruskin College buildings were still in the hands of the Government, but I was fortunate in obtaining the use of St. Edmund Hall. I had then to find tutors and lecturers, fix their remuneration, decide upon the amount of the students' fees, and draw up the curriculum. Rennie Smith had by this time left me for other work, and Miss Mary Longman, who had formerly been secretary to the Women's Labour League, took his place as my secretary. She had had great experience in organizing work, and gave me invaluable help in preparing for the summer school. The Workers' Union financed the school on a generous scale, providing the fees for all the organizers they sent.

The school lasted six weeks, from the middle of July until the end of August, and the students came some twenty at a time in three fortnightly batches. The first week of each fortnight was devoted to general economics, in which an attempt was made to outline the principles upon which industry is carried on, and the second week was devoted to special problems connected with trade unionism. A lecture was given every morning, and the students were divided into small classes for tuition in the afternoons. It was by no means a holiday for the Workers' Union organizers, who meant business, and they did some very good work. I took a considerable part in the teaching myself, and was fortunate enough to secure an excellent group of tutors, all of whom have since made their mark in either the political or the academic world. The students lived in St. Edmund Hall, and they took well to college life. The weather was very hot part of the time, and many of the lectures were given in the quadrangle. On one occasion a rather amusing incident occurred. At that time the Government was doing a good deal of espionage—or at any rate so it was supposed—in order to stop the spread of Bolshevism. While G. D. H. Cole was lecturing one day a stranger was seen hovering round the class, and before the discussion began one of the students went up to Cole and said: 'Perhaps you'd better be a bit careful what you say; I don't quite know what that chap there may be up to', indicating the stranger. 'Oh, it's all right,' said Cole; 'that's my father!'

During the school we suffered a great loss in the death of my father-in-law, H. F. Nicholl. My wife had undertaken the management of the domestic side, the allocation of rooms, etc., but in the middle of the time she was called away, having received a telegram to say that her father had died. She was very much attached to him, as in fact were all who knew him. His was a most attractive personality, and he had in some respects remained a boy all his life. He always looked at the world through rosy spectacles, and loved everybody he met. In fact, I cannot remember him ever saying anything really disagreeable about any one. As a boy he had been a great favourite of Henry Kingsley, who took him as a

model for his hero Charles Ravenshoe as boy and young man.

The school was undoubtedly a great success, and it certainly enhanced the prestige of Ruskin College. The students much appreciated it, and at its close presented my wife and myself with a beautiful piece of china. After it was over we went to the Trade Union Congress at Derby, and then took a short holiday at Lyme Regis. About this time I decided that it would be a good thing for the college to set up an office in London, thinking that I could get into closer touch with leading people in the Labour Movement if I worked in an office in some central position. So I was established in a very small room with an old-fashioned and smelly gas stove in Victoria Street, where I worked all day with Miss Longman for several months. This certainly did help to keep the college before the public, as those who were interested soon learned where to find me, and in the luncheon hour I had the opportunity of meeting and getting to know all kinds of people. By this time the Labour Party offices had been moved to Winston Churchill's old house in Eccleston Square, and my wife was working there with Marion Phillips. But Miss Longman and I generally joined her and the Labour Party staff for lunch at the Pillar Café at Victoria Station. These lunches were rather a feature of the Labour Party office at that time, and a great variety of interesting people used to appear at them. Arthur Henderson (or 'Uncle Arthur', as he is affectionately called in the Labour Movement) generally sat at the head of the table, where all the questions of the day were unreservedly discussed. It was here that I first came to know and admire Arthur Henderson and that a friendship began which has been a very pleasant feature of my life.

During this time, in addition to my work for the college, I had engaged in a new enterprise. The Labour Party had decided to contest all the university seats at the next general election, with a view to ascertaining the feeling of university men and women with regard to its policy. I was asked by the party to stand for Oxford University. This was quite a new departure for Oxford, where new departures are not popular. My candidature was settled in the main by a group

of Oxford people who were then in London, a point which was very much criticized by some of the Oxford residents, though why I have never been quite able to understand. It is true that the resident members of Convocation had always selected the candidates in the past and carried out the election in a somewhat high-handed manner, but there was no reason at all why this procedure should be continued. Even before the Representation of the People Act 1918 the resident M.A.s were only five hundred out of an electorate of five or six thousand, and after the Act was passed they were a very much smaller proportion.

The Oxford residents were still further upset by my distributing an election address—a thing quite unheard of. Hitherto manifestos had been issued by the Conservative and Liberal Parties signed by heads of houses, professors and other leading teachers, urging the claims of their respective candidates. No election addresses were ever issued, and of course no meetings were held. The candidates in fact took no part in the proceedings whatever. True, meetings were practically impossible except perhaps in Oxford itself, as the constituency even before the Act of 1918 consisted of all M.A.s who had their names on the books of a college. I did, however, offer to address a meeting at Oxford to explain my position and to satisfy the resident members with regard to the way in which I had been nominated, but the offer was declined. As all the university seats were being contested, the Labour Party arranged a meeting in London, with the idea of enabling as many university constituents as could be got together to meet the Labour candidates. At this meeting several university candidates, including myself, spoke.

I sent out not only an election address but a small pamphlet entitled *Oxford University and the Labour Party*. I had considerable difficulty in getting these circulated. Under the 1918 Act the university franchise was largely extended, and any one who had taken a degree could have the university vote so long as his name was on the books of a college, or on the Register. Would-be voters whose names were not on the books of a college could, on the payment of a fee of ten shillings, have their names placed on this Register. It was possible to get

the names and addresses of those who had registered, but large numbers of possible voters were serving abroad, and very little was done to make the existence of the Register known. As to the voters who had their names on the books, their addresses were of course for the most part known only at their colleges, and the only thing I could do was to send my literature to the colleges, hoping that it would be forwarded. Some of the bursars were extremely obliging in this respect, but others raised objections on the ground that their staff could not cope with the additional work involved, which was not unreasonable where there were a large number of names on the books. However, I got over this difficulty in some cases by paying for overtime. Only one bursar wrote to say that he thought the literature should not have been sent. Miss Longman went through Crockford for me, and I sent out hundreds of copies of my address to clergy all over the country.

If university representation must be retained—though in my opinion it is one of the first things that should be abolished by the Labour Party—it should not be almost impossible for candidates to get into touch with their constituents. Another weak point with regard to the Oxford University election was that though it was possible to vote by post voting papers were only issued to those who applied for them.

The pamphlet I sent out in October stated my reasons for coming forward, and explained my views on educational reform, social and economic reconstruction, and the War. My address went out early in December. In it I summed up my views as to the position of Oxford with regard to educational reform as follows : ‘ Should I be elected, I should do everything in my power to make it possible for all to have the opportunity of the best education that the nation can provide without distinction of class or income, and I believe that Oxford should take a leading place both in advocating and in facilitating educational reform of a sweeping character. I regard education as an essential means for the living of the full life, not primarily as a means of obtaining a livelihood. It must have in view not merely highly-skilled workers or up-to-date employers, but good citizens. Oxford must not be turned into a technical school : it must

not be captured in the interests of commerce, or used simply as a means of enabling the members of any class whatever to "get on". I shall therefore not give my support to any measure which would tend to make Oxford other than a place where "true religion and sound learning shall for ever flourish". The main part of the address dealt with the Labour Party policy with regard to after-War problems, and explained its reasons for leaving the Coalition.

I had some amusing replies to my literature. One took the form of the return of my address torn in half. The voter who believed it worth while to spend twopence in this way was, I think, a colonel. Another of my critics wrote to inquire whether I was a worker by hand or by brain; he had imagined, he said, that I was not a worker by hand, and after reading my address was convinced that I could not be a worker by brain!

When the polling day drew near I was actually asked by the then registrar to withdraw from the contest on the ground of the trouble I was giving to the university and its officials. Gilbert Murray, who finally stood as a Liberal candidate, had not then entered the field, so that as matters stood if I had withdrawn the two Conservative candidates would have been returned unopposed. But I was determined to go on, and also to see that the election was as far as possible carried out in accordance with the Act. I therefore decided to be represented at the count, and wrote to the Vice-Chancellor informing him of my intention. He replied pointing out that the count was conducted by himself and his officials, and he thought that I might be willing to trust them. I told the Vice-Chancellor that of course I had not thought of doubting that the count would be fairly conducted, but said I considered the election ought to be carried out in conformity with the Act. So I sent a clerk from the National Union of Clerks to represent me. I heard afterwards that Lord Hugh Cecil, perhaps following my example, was also represented at the count. By the 1918 Act all university members were to be elected under Proportional Representation, and this was the first parliamentary election carried out under this principle. The National Union of Clerks elected their executive by Proportional Representation, and

my representative had helped in more than one election of this kind, and knew all about it. When he came back he gave me rather an amusing account of the proceedings. He said : ' They took a very long time over the count—much longer than was necessary ; but I think this was because they called in several mathematicians to help them. I told the Vice-Chancellor I thought it had been a mistake to call in the mathematicians, as this caused delay, and he seemed very much pleased.' My friend of course did not happen to know that the Vice-Chancellor was a distinguished classical scholar ! After the election I wrote to the Vice-Chancellor, asking him if he would like to have a statement of my election expenses, for which, under the Act, he should have asked. But he said that if I could make head or tail of certain clauses in the Act, and then thought I ought to send in a statement, I could do as I liked about it. The clauses in question were fairly explicit, but I decided to let the matter drop. I obtained 351 votes, which was not bad, taking all things into consideration. But this number was not enough to save my deposit.

I did not take much further part in the general election of 1918 ; in fact, I have not been able to do very much at general elections since I strained my heart in 1910. My wife worked very hard, and spoke in various parts of the country. We both went to help an old Ruskin student, Ted Gill, who was standing for the Frome Division of Somerset, and I spoke for him at Frome and Midsummer Norton. I denounced the ' Hang the Kaiser and make Germany pay ' policy in the strongest terms, and met with no opposition at all. We are essentially a generous people, and I am convinced that had the right lead been given to the nation at that time, and had a reasonable peace policy been put before it, the lead would have been followed and much future suffering avoided.

After the Armistice we had decided to stay on in London until the spring, with occasional week-ends at Ascott. Towards the end of January, however, when we were at Chesnut Close for one of these week-ends, my wife became seriously ill with an acute form of blood-poisoning. The influenza epidemic was raging at the time, and for some days it was impossible to find

a nurse either in Oxford or London. We had with us our faithful Grace and her sister Evelyn, who had been with us since 1909, but who had been doing War work and had only just returned to us. She had been employed on munitions in Gloucestershire, where she had, with some difficulty at first, established a branch of the National Federation of Women Workers, in which she finally enrolled all the women workers in the factory. When my wife was taken ill Grace and Evelyn, besides looking after me and the house (which was a fairly large one), nursed her—never leaving her by night or day, and it is largely due to their devotion that she pulled through. As it was impossible for her to return to London I decided to give up the flat and my office, and to stay down at Ascott until the time came for the reopening of Ruskin College for residential work. From Ascott, with occasional visits to London, I was able to make the necessary preparations.

Miss Longman had left me to be married, but Gribble came back to me in February. F. Smith, who was formerly head clerk in the office at Ruskin, became secretary of the college, and Sam was appointed to do some organizing work on its behalf amongst the trade unions and other Labour bodies. The Government was unable to hand back the college buildings until June 1919, so it was decided not to begin full residential work until October. But in the meantime we had a fifth conference and another summer school, and I was responsible for the arrangements for both these undertakings. In addition to this work I of course had a great deal to do in connexion with the reopening of the college in October, and I gave occasional lectures for the W.E.A., besides attending a good many W.E.A. committees. The fifth conference was held at Coventry in May on 'The Trade Unions: Organization and Action'.

In July we moved into the principal's lodgings at the college for the summer school, which went on for six weeks from the middle of July to the end of August. It was again arranged primarily for the Workers' Union organizers, but was this time thrown open to members of other Labour bodies, so that we had a much larger number of students. It was conducted on the same lines as the 1918 school. I had got together a

good staff of tutors, and the school was quite as successful as its predecessor. On both occasions our school was held at the same time as the Oxford W.E.A. Summer School, and there was much coming and going between the two sets of students. They met at each other's socials and special lectures, and this contributed greatly to the social side of the life.

In September we went for a holiday in Devonshire, and in October settled down to our new life in the college.

XIV

AT THE PRINCIPAL'S LODGINGS—I

WHEN we went to live at the college in July 1919 I had for three years been in a sense a principal without a college. Now I was to begin my work as principal in residence, with the college in full swing. One of the conditions of my appointment had been that I should live in the principal's lodgings as soon as the college could reopen for residential work, and this arrangement my wife and I both welcomed, feeling that we could not do the work required of us satisfactorily unless we lived on the spot. We sold Whirlow House, and settled into the very comfortable little house which forms part of the college buildings, surrounded on all sides by the students' rooms.

In 1919 I was much better equipped for work at Ruskin than in 1914. During the years before the war I had been simply a tutor and had devoted most of my time to teaching. I had lived almost entirely in Oxford, and although I had become interested in the Labour Movement and the Labour Party, I really knew very little about them. I had met very few of the men and women who were playing an active part in the political or the industrial world. It is true that I had become a Socialist, but my outlook was somewhat academic, and I had done very little active work in the Labour Movement. During the War I had come to know more or less intimately most of the leading people on both the political and industrial sides of the movement, partly through living in London and through my work for the college, partly by attending Trade Union congresses and Labour Party conferences. I had also had opportunities of meeting and talking to many economists, social workers, and people interested in all kinds of social, political, and economic questions. In addition to all this, the time I spent as W.E.A. secretary gave me some most valuable experience with regard to administrative work, and through my con-

nexion with the W.E.A. generally I had learned a great deal about educational questions as they affected working people.

I was no doubt better equipped in many ways, but against this must be set off the fact that since 1914 I had gradually been becoming blinder. It may be thought that as I had been practically blind all my life this could not have made very much difference. But the difference was considerable. For instance, the difficulty of finding my way about a strange room and of avoiding furniture was increased. The difference between just being able to distinguish the outline and the figure and even the face of a pupil seated in a chair close to me, and not being able to tell by sight whether there was any one in the chair or not, does mean a good deal. Again, to take another small point which is probably not often thought of by those who can see, conversation is made much more difficult if you cannot see when the person sitting next to you, for instance, at a dinner-party has turned to speak to his or her other neighbour. Again, a blind man often finds himself talking to some one who was sitting next to him, but whom he has not heard move away. All these things probably do not matter very much, and the blind are perhaps over-sensitive about them, but they do add somewhat to the worry and strain of life.

During the years of the War I saw two or three oculists, and they all told me that there was nothing to be done. But in the summer of 1919 I had recourse to an unqualified man of whom I had then heard, and embarked on a course of treatment at which I worked hard for about eight months. I thought I gained a certain amount of improvement at first, but there is no doubt that the treatment ultimately did me a good deal of harm. It involved a great nervous strain, and I only abandoned it just in time to avoid a serious nervous breakdown. Of course I was combining the treatment with extremely hard work at the college, so it would not be fair to put down the whole of the strain to my efforts to improve my sight.

Ruskin College was certainly in a stronger position in 1919 than it had been in 1914. The conferences we had held had done much to make it more widely known in the country,

and the two summer schools had increased its prestige in the trade union world. The need for adult working-class education had become more generally recognized, and a feeling had grown up that young men and women who had missed educational advantages owing to the War should be given the chance of making good their loss. Both this fact and the improved status of Ruskin College were recognized by the Board of Education in the establishment of the Ex-Service Higher Education Scheme, which was primarily intended to give ex-service men the opportunity of taking university degrees under special conditions. I had been in fairly close touch with the Board for some time past, and succeeded in persuading it to include in the scheme the sending of students for one or two years to Ruskin College. In the next year or two about twelve students came to the college under the scheme.

There is one point as to which, throughout the time I was at Ruskin, I always felt most strongly—that is, that the college should maintain a high educational standard. It is too often imagined that things must be made easy for the workers, that they are not capable of the intellectual effort necessary for close and intensive study or for obtaining a real grasp of difficult and abstruse subjects. This is a mistake. I have always held that the very best should be set before working people, and that they should be encouraged to aim high, though they may not all succeed in reaching the mark. The standard had been much too low before the War, and I was determined that improvements in this respect should be secured when the college reopened. For some time past I had been negotiating with the Board of Education with a view to obtaining a grant, and in 1920 the college was for the first time recognized by the Board as an institution for higher education, and allowed an annual grant on a *per capita* basis. This removed, or should have removed, all grounds for suspicion that the education given was of a partisan or Bolshevik nature. But, on the other hand, it exposed us to a renewal of the charge on the part of the Plebs League and the extremists in the Labour Movement that we were a bourgeois institution, giving partisan education in support of capitalism; the answer to which was, of course, that the college was entirely controlled

by the representatives of working-class bodies. The two achievements that I have been connected with during the years I spent at Ruskin College of which I am most proud are the bringing of the college under working-class control, and the obtaining of recognition by the Board of Education. These two developments have been wholly for good, and have been of the utmost importance with regard to the status of the college.

It had from the earliest days been intended that women should be included amongst the residential students, but down to 1914 it had not been found practicable to realize this ideal. Before I became a tutor one or two women resident in Oxford had, I believe, attended lectures, but none had ever actually come into residence. In the later years of the War my wife and I felt strongly that the college ought to reopen with women as well as men students. The Governing Council approved of the idea, and my wife set to work to secure the necessary funds and to obtain students. She conducted a most strenuous campaign—visiting trade union secretaries, writing endless letters, and paying visits to all sorts of women whom she thought might be sympathetic. Several drawing-room meetings were held in London. The result of all these activities was that sufficient money was raised for the purchase of a women's hostel in Linton Road, Oxford, which was known as Queens' Gardens. Interest in women's education had increased, and, as in the case of men, arrangements were made by the Government to provide for women opportunities of education and training which they had lost owing to the War. A body known as the Central Committee on Women's Employment was set up, and through it we obtained some women students during the next two or three years. The National Federation of Women Workers provided a scholarship and sent a student, and one or two other trade unions became interested and gave scholarships or part scholarships for women. The Men's and Women's Works Councils from Messrs. Cadbury's at Bournville sent women students as well as men. A scholarship which had been given for many years by the West Riding County Council was in 1920 won by a woman, and one or two more came who were able to pay their own fees.

Queens' Gardens was opened in October 1919, but we had to begin with only seven students. The hostel was in charge of a matron—Miss Hurlestone—who was very popular, not only with the girl students but also with the men. There was a good tennis court, and all the outdoor and some of the indoor college social gatherings were held at Queens' Gardens, where Miss Hurlestone was a very welcoming and gracious hostess. The number of students increased to twelve in the following year, and finally a total of nineteen was reached.

In 1919, as I have said, the college held a better position in the trade union world than was the case at the outbreak of the War, and scholarships were given by several trade unions which had not hitherto sent students. We were therefore able to make a fresh start with some forty-five students in all. The majority of these stayed for two years, and in 1920 the number of new students brought the total up to seventy-five—fifty-nine men and sixteen women, the largest number ever at the college in one year. I had managed to get together a good staff of young tutors—four in all—and after the first year a vice-principal was appointed, which gave us a staff of six, including myself. In 1920, one of the tutors, who had resigned to take up other work, was replaced by a lady tutor.

A point as to which I have been a good deal criticized was my determination to make Ruskin self-sufficing with regard to its teaching. Before the War, when the college was very much understaffed, the custom had grown up of sending the students out to lectures in the university, while some of the tuition was also given outside the college by university tutors. I had felt then that the students were attending far too many lectures and not receiving enough individual tuition. While some of our more advanced men gained a good deal from university lectures, I am still convinced that the majority of lectures given in the university are not well adapted to meet the needs of the kind of student who comes up to Ruskin College. Many of the Ruskin men, at any rate when they first come up, are not able to write quickly enough to take down lectures, and have no experience of note-taking, and apart from this I am quite convinced that the majority of lectures are of little use to anybody unless they are followed up by a discussion, or at

any rate by questions. In Oxford all lectures last for a little under an hour, and there is not really time even for questions. The experiment of inviting questions has been tried in recent years, but without much success, the ordinary undergraduate being shy and unaccustomed to this practice. I have heard a lecturer who tried the plan referred to by undergraduates as 'the blighter who tries to make us ask questions!' The working-class student, on the other hand, is thoroughly at home in a discussion, and as a rule only too eager to question a lecturer. Again, I have rarely heard a lecture given which has been followed by a discussion where it has not been made quite clear in the course of the discussion that important points in the lecture have been misunderstood by some members of the audience. Lectures can no doubt be of great value as a means of stimulating interest in the subject which is being studied. I very much doubt their utility when their object is simply the provision and boiling down of information, which it is far better for the student to dig out of books for himself.

We decided to have one lecture a day only, each lecture to last an hour and to be followed by half an hour's discussion. However, we still continued the practice of sending some of our second-year men to university lectures to meet special needs for which our staff was unable to provide, and in some cases to supplement the college teaching.

University lecturers who had been accustomed to see anything from a dozen to twenty Ruskin College students at their lectures, when they began to find none at all or at most one or two, seemed to have got into their heads the idea that I was attempting to boycott the university, and paragraphs appeared in the London Press from time to time asking why Ruskin College was holding aloof from the university. I of course had no such idea in mind, but was simply aiming at providing in the college the kind of education which was most suited to the needs of our students—a kind which was not provided by the university, or, if it was provided, was not presented by methods adapted to their requirements. Certain subjects which our students needed were even after the War hardly taught by the university. The provision for the teaching of Economics

was still most inadequate, and the history of working-class movements, such as trade unionism and co-operation, was still practically ignored altogether. Even at the present day Oxford is, I believe, the only university in the world where the subject of statistics is not systematically taught—a strange omission in the curriculum of a university which turns out so many civil servants and business men. During these years I was always urging in private and in public that the university should adapt its curriculum and its methods so as more nearly to meet the needs of working-class students, and I welcome the fact that Oxford has in recent years gone a little way in this direction. But with regard to the years immediately following the War, I am sure I was right in pursuing my policy of making the college as far as possible self-sufficing. The relations between the college and the university were quite friendly, and university men constantly lectured at Ruskin on special occasions, while our second-year students each year went in for the Oxford Diploma in Economics and Political Science with considerable success.

As a substitute for lectures we adopted the practice of taking students in small classes of four or five. The students in each class took turns in opening a discussion by reading a short paper on a question set by the tutor, and the tutor summed up the discussion or took part in it as he saw fit. Each student had some four or five classes in the course of the week. We found that these classes had distinct advantages over lectures, as in them every student could be encouraged to take a part and to express himself, whereas there was a tendency for discussions following lectures to be carried on mainly by the bolder spirits or the more competent amongst the audience, while the retiring man or woman was apt to sit silent. In addition to the classes, we also aimed at giving each student an hour's individual tuition every week with an essay, on the lines of the regular Oxford tutorial system. The subjects of the curriculum were the same as those taught before the War, but as a great demand for Psychology had grown up this subject was added. I do not think the addition of Psychology was of any real advantage to the students; they had not sufficient philosophical or scientific background to make them

appreciate its difficulties or to realize the tentative nature of its conclusions, and the effect upon them was often to make them too glib with half-understood and sometimes almost meaningless phrases. It also tended to make them much too introspective, sometimes with bad results to both their mental and physical health. Another subject upon which much more stress was laid then formerly was English Literature, which was broadened so as to include lectures on drama and the arts. This was very much appreciated by all the students, who regarded it as a welcome relaxation from their more abstract studies. The curriculum was further enlarged by the introduction of a short yearly course on Trade Union Law, which was found useful by students intending to take up trade union work. The visiting lecturer appointed for this subject was my friend H. H. Slessor.¹ During the War years in London we met, as I have said, most of the prominent people in the Labour Movement, and much enriched our circle of friends. Harry Slessor had helped me with my two summer schools in 1918 and 1919, and a very intimate friendship grew up between ourselves and the Slessors. Harry and Margaret were both greatly interested in Ruskin College, and constantly stayed with us there and at Ascott.

Quite apart from the ordinary curriculum, we arranged for a fortnightly evening lecture throughout every term, to be given by some recognized authority in his subject or by some leading man in the industrial or political world. To these lectures visitors were invited, and they nearly always led to most animated discussions. Amongst the many lecturers who helped in this way were Laurence Binyon, Dr. Percy Buck, Maurice Hewlett, George Lansbury, H. C. Charleton, Sir John Adams, Arthur Greenwood, Harold Laski, Geoffrey Whitworth, John Buchan, A. D. Lindsay, Edwin Cannan, A. E. Zimmern, Josiah Wedgwood, R. L. Reiss, and Eric Gill. Occasionally the fortnightly lecture gave place to a musical evening. Some fascinating talks on music with illustrations by Miss Deneke and a violin recital by Ernest Whitfield and Dr. Harris stand out very clearly in my memory. Ernest Whitfield—the blind

¹ Afterwards Solicitor-General in the Labour Government of 1924; Lord Justice 1929.

violinist, an old friend of ours—was astonished by the enthusiasm with which his playing was received. He gave a somewhat stiff programme, strictly classical, and held the students spell-bound throughout the performance. To most of them it was an entirely new experience. Few of them had realized the beauty of perfect violin playing or the power of really fine music. Whitfield lingered on after the concert talking to the students, and at eleven-thirty we found him playing the Bach *Chaconne* to an enthralled audience. I should not be surprised if this evening at Ruskin had something to do with the fact that to-day he is as happy speaking on a Labour platform as playing in a concert hall!

The lectures on art and drama and literature were quite as popular as those on economics and politics. Percy Buck and Laurence Binyon were particular favourites. On one occasion when Laurence Binyon was lecturing I, as chairman, made a most unfortunate joke, saying that as far as I knew Karl Marx—great as he was—had never written a poem (quite a mistake on my part, as I afterwards discovered, for Marx did in his youth publish a volume of poems). My wife later in the evening found a young student almost in tears on the stairs who, when pressed as to the cause of his grief, said he had 'never expected to hear the Principal make fun of Marx!'

Maurice Hewlett came to the college a year or two before his death. His lecture rather surprised the students, for at that time he was vigorously advocating poverty, hard work, and large families. The first two of this trio at any rate did not much appeal to them! I remember him discussing the difference between happiness and pleasure, and his summing up of the question has always remained in my mind—'Happiness is static, pleasure is ecstatic.' He was delightfully boyish, and the students thoroughly enjoyed themselves with him. We found him a little difficult to entertain the next morning, as we were very busy and he refused to be left alone. He was in an extraordinarily undecided mood, and wanted me to decide for him whether he should or should not go on to stay with some friends with whom he was not certain of being comfortable, and I was reminded of a former occasion when he came to see me in London to ask my advice on a scheme of his

for embarking on a tour with John Burns with the object of lecturing in the rural districts on agricultural questions. He talked to us a good deal about his books. '*The Forest Lovers* somehow "went", he said, 'but I don't know why.' He was quite convinced, he told us, that he could never write another novel.

We were always present at these fortnightly meetings, though very often a student took the chair, it being thought by the students good practice to have some experience of this kind. We enjoyed the evenings quite as much as the students, and often had much good talk in our lodgings, where we entertained the lecturer. Apart from these set lectures and concerts, however, the college became a regular 'house of call' for all sorts of distinguished people—and others—passing through Oxford. On one occasion Lord Robert Cecil (as he then was) came to see us, and expressed a wish to meet the students and have a talk with them about the League of Nations. We took him down to the dining-room, therefore, to have tea with them, and after tea he proceeded to expound his views. He was, I think, a little surprised when a very young girl sprang up and said: 'Thank you very much for all you have said, but I don't agree with a word of it!' This led to a great discussion, which he must have enjoyed, for he forgot he was dining out at seven until it was nearly seven-thirty. I had to spend a good deal of time interviewing Americans, Japanese, Germans—in fact, people from all over the world who expressed themselves as anxious to know about the college. I found that some of the Americans were more anxious to tell me of their own achievements in the field of education than to listen to what I had to say. The Japanese, however, to my horror whipped out note-books and tried to take down everything I said, constantly stopping to ask me to spell words for them!

Before the college reopened, the Governing Council had agreed to a very important change with regard to the length of the terms. This change came about in a rather curious way. Before the War the college year lasted for forty-four weeks, and the fees were £52. I wanted to raise the fees to £100, knowing that with post-War prices it would be quite impossible

to carry on the college for less. But so big a change was too much for the trade unions who provided scholarships, most of them thinking that a rise to £65 a year would be ample. I pointed out that £65 would only suffice if the length of the year was reduced from forty-four to thirty-three weeks, and this was finally agreed to. But the fees had to be raised to £100 in the following year. The year was then divided into three terms of eleven weeks each, with adequate breaks at Christmas and at Easter and a three months' vacation in the summer. I am sure that we got through quite as much work as we did in the old days, while there was an absence of that staleness that used to set in amongst both staff and students towards the end of the longer spells.

Certain changes were introduced at this time in the domestic arrangements. A matron took the place of the cook of former days, and she had a staff of three women who were responsible for the cleaning of the college. As a result it was found possible to reduce the domestic work done by the students to serving at meals, washing up, and keeping their rooms in order—a reform which was scoffed at by the old students when they revisited the college, but one which would no doubt have been appreciated by them had they still been in residence! Our friend Miss Ethel Smith (who, as I have said, had been matron of the May Home), had just been demobilized, and we felt how much her help would mean to us if she could be persuaded to come as matron. She consented to the proposal, and her skill and tact added much to the smooth running of the college. She was a trained nurse, watched over the students like a mother, and is remembered by many generations of them with the warmest affection.

XV

AT THE PRINCIPAL'S LODGINGS—II

THE actual opening of the college in October 1919 was not a great success, for the day happened to be almost the last day of the great railway strike, and only one student turned up, arriving from Bristol on a bicycle. However, the strike came to an end on the following day, and the other forty-four students soon appeared. They came, as before the War, from all parts of the country and from a great variety of trades. They had had very varying experiences during the four years of the War. Many of them had served in the army or navy, and some had been conscientious objectors, and we heard greetings such as the following when the students met together for their first meal: 'Hullo, I remember you in Mesopotamia!'; 'Why, the last time I saw you was in Wormwood Scrubs!' In spite of the widely different points of view taken with regard to the War there was never the slightest sign of ill-feeling or bitterness as between those who had fought and those who had refused. The conscientious objectors made no parade of trying to press their point of view on the ex-soldiers, while those who had gone through the War often expressed admiration for the men who had suffered as pacifists.

Practically all the students were Socialists—except those who were Communists—and there were some very extreme men and women among them. They were nearly all imbued with an extraordinary optimism as to the future of society. They were naturally tremendously excited by the events which had taken place in Russia, and many of them swallowed, quite uncritically, the accounts they heard of the success of the Soviet revolution. There was a feeling in the air that great changes were imminent, and that successful revolution was an easy matter. The students generally were much more restless than those who were in residence before the War, and less willing to settle down to hard work. They were more interested

in the study of Utopian ideals than in the attempt to understand and criticize the social conditions under which they lived. I think it would be true to say that the extremists before the War were mainly occupied in devising methods by which capitalism could be overthrown, while the extremists after the War regarded capitalism as on its last legs and bound to collapse almost immediately through its own incapacity. They therefore turned their attention more to a discussion of the kind of society by which capitalism should be replaced. Discussions between the staff and students were therefore apt to be too much in the air, and it was difficult to get down to bed-rock.

This optimistic attitude made serious work very difficult, for at the back of the minds of many of the students there seemed to be the feeling, not often definitely expressed: 'What's the good of all this when the whole thing is going to be changed quite soon?' This optimism died down in the course of two or three years, and was followed, as is usually the case, by a wave of pessimism, which was, however, much more conducive to serious study. While very good work was done by some of the students, on the whole I should say that the general level of ability and power of concentrated study was at this time less than amongst those who came up before the War. This I believe was noticed to be the case with regard to junior members of the universities. No doubt the War itself was mainly responsible, for even when men had not actually been wounded, nearly all had suffered from a long nervous strain, the effects of which they began to feel as soon as it was removed.

Those responsible for the Plebs League and the Labour College were still strongly hostile to Ruskin, and every year one or two students arrived who rather naïvely announced that they had been sent by the Labour College in order either to wreck Ruskin College or to turn it into the 'true path'. Though they for a time created a certain amount of friction and caused a good deal of restlessness in the college, they always found that they had taken on more than they could manage, and soon settled down into good students.

The presence of the women made a difference to the atmosphere, for while they lived at Queens' Gardens, which

was about a mile away, they did most of their work in the college with the men, and of course joined in all the social activities. They no doubt did much to develop the social side of the life, and had in some respects a refining influence. But they also introduced a certain element of excitement into the life which was not there before ; and although some of them worked hard themselves, on the whole I doubt very much whether they improved the amenities of the college as a place of study.

I was never able to revive anything like the old socials, partly because the socials had to be held in a large and rather bare hall instead of a small but cosy room. Times had changed ; the atmosphere was different, and the spirit of the students was also different. Partly owing to the presence of women, and partly owing to the mania for dancing which overspread most of Europe at that time, dancing began to take the place of socials and sing-songs. The students were allowed to invite their friends, and dances took place in the hall two or three times a term at first, and later fortnightly. They were extremely popular with all the students except a few who were not dancers but wanted to read and who did not like the noise involved, but on the whole they were probably a satisfactory means of letting off steam. In addition to the ordinary dancing, folk-dancing became very popular at the college in these years.

The question of athletic exercise has always been a difficulty for Ruskin students. The majority of them are unaccustomed to games, and, apart from this, there was the difficulty of obtaining a suitable playing-field. Oxford is a curious place in this respect. It has far more open spaces than any other town of its size, but these are nearly all in the hands of the university and colleges, and there are probably few towns of its size whose citizens are so badly off for recreation grounds. Ruskin, being neither of the university nor of the city, has naturally always been very badly placed. We did manage to share a football ground with a local club, but a cricket ground has always been out of the question.

On the whole, life at the college had changed considerably since the old days. It was less simple. The students lived more comfortably ; their scholarships were larger, and they had

more money to spend. The domestic work had been cut down, and few of the men had made the sacrifices to come which were made by pre-War students. While there was a great deal of talk about Socialism, Karl Marx, Communism, and the Russian Revolution, there was less self-sacrifice and enthusiasm about work for the political or industrial movements, and Socialism had become much less a religion than formerly. In spite of these changes, however, the atmosphere during these years was exceedingly friendly and pleasant. The staff and students got on well together, such discipline as was necessary was easy to maintain, and there was scarcely any friction beyond what was caused by occasional healthy little 'rebellions', quite natural amongst a body of high-spirited young men and women accustomed to think for themselves.

Life was much more centred within the college than formerly. There was less desire amongst the students to take part in activities in Oxford or in the surrounding country, and the practice of going away to address meetings at week-ends had been entirely abandoned. The only occurrence in Oxford that I can remember during these years into which the students threw themselves with enthusiasm was what was known as the Oxford Bus Strike, which took place in the summer of 1921. The bus-drivers and conductors had joined the Vehicle Workers' Union, and were demanding higher wages. The bus company refused their demand, and were determined not to recognize the union. The men thereupon came out on strike, and Ruskin College, staff and students, threw themselves whole-heartedly into the struggle. We were naturally a good deal criticized for this proceeding, but it must be remembered that practically all the students were keen trade unionists, and they could not be expected to stand by and see these men, as they thought, unfairly treated. The strike only lasted a week, and the activities of the students did not interfere very much with their studies. In connexion with the strike a rather amusing incident took place. One evening a blackleg bus was held up by a party of strikers, with whom were a few of our students, and one of our men was arrested. He was subsequently brought before the magistrates on the somewhat quaintly worded charge of 'pulling the driver's leg'. Slesser came down

to defend him, and he was acquitted amidst rather unseemly applause from the crowded court.

Shortly before this time the Oxford University Labour Club had been founded, Arthur Henderson being the first president and I one of the vice-presidents. There was of course much coming and going between the members of the club and the college, and it was soon decided that members of Ruskin College should be eligible for membership. In subsequent years Ruskin men and women held office in the club, and they have always taken a very keen interest in it. The club, like the college, threw itself whole-heartedly into the cause of the busmen, helping as much as they were allowed to do, and perhaps a little more. On one occasion the club invited George Lansbury to come down and address them. The meeting was arranged to take place in the Assembly Room, but, oddly enough as it seems now, when Lansbury arrived it was found that the meeting had been banned by the authorities. He was, of course, brought straight to Ruskin, where the meeting was held amidst scenes of great excitement and enthusiasm. Lansbury had not spoken many minutes when the college and the hall were stormed by a large body of hostile undergraduates, and something like a free fight ensued, most of the invaders being ultimately cast out. Lord de la Warr, who was then an undergraduate and already a keen Labour man, took an active part in this struggle. In the general *mêlée*, however, he was mistaken for an 'enemy', and found himself being flung head foremost into the street. His Ruskin friends soon discovered the mistake, dragged him in by the legs, and brought him back triumphantly to the hall! The whole thing was a rag, and there was no real ill-feeling. Lansbury conducted the meeting with his usual skill and disarming good temper, with the result that two of the leaders of the hostile crowd asked him to breakfast with them in college next morning. He had thoroughly enjoyed himself, and in spite of a hard day's work followed by a very stormy evening, sat up talking in our house long into the night with unabated vigour.

I worked exceedingly hard during these years. I took a considerable share in the teaching, lecturing twice a week all through the year, taking four or five classes each week, and

giving a good deal of individual tuition. My teaching of course made necessary a considerable amount of reading, for I was always anxious to keep myself as far as possible up to date in my subject. There were very few books on Economics done in Braille at this time, so that practically all the reading necessary for my work had to be done orally. I had also a large amount of administrative work to do in connexion with the college finances and with the raising of new funds. Ruskin was very differently placed from an ordinary Oxford college. It had no endowments whatever apart from one thousand pounds in Consols which brought in thirty pounds a year. It had to live from hand to mouth as regards income, and not only had we to persuade working-class bodies, educational trusts, and individuals to provide scholarships, but when these were provided they had to be made known to likely students. Though there is always a demand for adult education of the kind given by the college, there is often great difficulty in finding men and women who are able to avail themselves of educational opportunities when they occur. When employment is good the workers are afraid to leave their jobs, and during periods of unemployment they are often unwilling to leave their own neighbourhood for fear of missing the chance of work which might become available during their absence. Again, for every student who came to the college there was the risk that he or she might not get back to the work they had left. Cases were by no means unknown of students who had been victimized because they had been at Ruskin. The ordinary college has all its scholarships provided, and has merely to select the best men out of a large number of candidates. We had not only to raise the scholarships but to find the scholars. All this involved a great deal of correspondence, and the constant drafting of appeals and circulars.

I was responsible for laying before the executive committee plans for the development of our work and lines of policy, which meant the drafting of memoranda on all sorts of subjects. I had to attend all the executive meetings and those of its sub-committees, and also to see to a great deal of the business which arose out of their meetings. My wife and I entertained all the visitors to the college, and, as I have said, a good deal of

my time was spent in interviewing strangers who came to make inquiries about our work. The students came freely to see my wife and me to talk not only about the college but about their private affairs—their sweethearts, their mothers, their plans for the future, and what not. The principal's lodgings were open to them, and we wanted them to feel that our house was a sort of home where they were always welcome. We generally dined, and sometimes had tea with the students, so we were in very close touch with them, and many became real friends. We also kept in touch with students of former days; the Fellowship was of course revived, and its annual Whitsuntide meetings brought many old friends to the college. Then there was my daily interview with the college secretary, the checking of the weekly time-tables, the fortnightly staff meetings, interviews with the matron about domestic matters, applications to be dealt with from students who wanted leave to be out beyond the closing hour, and countless other little matters involved in the routine of college life.

The relations between the Ruskin College staff and the students were very different from those which prevail between the dons and the undergraduates in an ordinary Oxford college. While the authority of the staff was clearly recognized in essential matters, and especially in connexion with work, in other respects there was the most friendly equality and a disappearance of the dividing line between teacher and taught. Any one coming into the college when it was in its lighter moods might almost have imagined themselves in the midst of a large family party. The students were very fond of acting, and there was a good deal of talent amongst them. On one occasion I found myself cast for the part of the old man in Chapin's *Philosopher of Butterbiggin*, and the play was produced with myself, two students, and the baby of one of the college charwomen. I had never appeared on the boards before, but the play was so successful that we had to repeat it, and a large number of university friends who were invited to this performance must have been somewhat staggered to find a principal of a college providing the comic element of the evening! I was exceedingly pleased with myself at the success of my performance, but since then have been content to rest on my

laurels. One of our tutors, Stephen Schofield, developed a real talent as a playwright, and it may perhaps one day be rather gratifying to Ruskin to remember that all his early plays were written for the college and acted by students and staff. In the old days my wife used to produce the college plays herself, but she and Schofield now collaborated and spent much time over the Dramatic Society, which became well known in Oxford and the neighbourhood. Schofield had a remarkable talent for burlesque, and at the break-up socials both staff and students had to stand the fire of his friendly but caustic wit. None of our little foibles escaped notice ; in fact, we were all held up to ridicule. I have always felt that it spoke much for the spirit of the college that the principal and the staff (to say nothing of their wives), as well as the students, could be laughed at in each other's presence.

This complete freedom, however, never added to the difficulty of keeping order in the college. The students were the first to recognize that some rules were necessary, and they liked to feel that the college was running on orderly lines. As was natural among a large body of young men, there were a good many 'rags', and occasionally some noisy disturbances at night. I always allowed considerable latitude, but when I sometimes sallied forth in the early hours of the morning in my dressing-gown silence was immediately restored ! The students were extraordinarily considerate. When my mother-in-law, who was then an invalid, was staying with us, at a time when these rags had been rather frequent, my wife explained the position and asked them to be as quiet as possible while Mrs. Nicholl was there. During the whole of her visit complete silence reigned at night, the student who occupied the room above hers even remembering to abandon his usual habit of dropping his boots heavily on the floor.

In the year 1919-20 I had in hand three special pieces of work which lay outside the ordinary college routine. In January 1920 we held our sixth conference, in London, the subject being 'The Trade Unions and Output'. I had to contribute a good deal to one of the papers, and was responsible for getting out the report, which formed the last volume of the *Reorganization of Industry* series.

It was decided to hold a third summer school in August 1920, and the preparations for this gave me a considerable amount of work. But beyond one or two lectures and a certain amount of class tuition I did not take much part in the actual teaching. After 1920 we had no more summer schools, thinking it best to concentrate on our own students and for the staff to have their full holidays in order that they might have more time for rest and for the preparation of new lectures. But summer schools were still carried on in the college, the buildings being let in the vacations to other working-class bodies for this purpose.

The third special piece of work which fell to my lot during this year was the preparation of two long memoranda for the Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge. One of these was sent in to the Commission by the governing council of the college, its main object being to supply the Commission with information with regard to the cost of living, and as to the twenty years' work which the college had done in providing higher education to working-class residential students. The other memorandum made several suggestions with regard to university reform, and was signed by the three consultative members of the governing council and myself. As a result of the memoranda, I was asked to go before the Commission and to take a student with me, and we were cross-examined at some length. Mr. Asquith (as he then was) was in the chair, and he did not appear to be much interested in the proceedings until in the course of the discussion it came out that the student I had with me was a Yorkshireman. At this Mr. Asquith pricked up his ears, and asked us what we wanted and why we had come before the Commission. When I told him that we wanted nothing, but that our object in coming was merely to place some information before the Commission which we hoped might be useful to it, he seemed much surprised—perhaps having in mind the well-known Yorkshire maxim as to never giving 'owt for nowt'! However, I learned afterwards that he was largely instrumental in obtaining for the college a very valuable grant from a well-known educational trust.

In addition to my work in and for the college I carried on a good many activities outside. I was still a member of the Central Council and Executive of the W.E.A. and of the Oxford

University Tutorial Classes Joint Committee. I was a vice-chairman of the South-Eastern District of the W.E.A. and a member of the University Committee for Economics and Political Science. During these years I wrote several articles on education for various papers and periodicals, and still reviewed for *The Economic Journal*. In 1922 I became a member of the National League of the Blind, and for some time contributed monthly articles to a magazine written in Braille and published partly under the auspices of the League. I took an active part in forming the Banbury Division of Oxfordshire Labour Party, of which I was successively chairman and vice-chairman, and also did a certain amount of work for the Oxford City Labour Party and the Oxford Branch of the I.L.P. My wife and I attended each year the Labour Party Conference and the Trade Union Congress. I did a little speaking at the general election of 1922 and my wife a great deal. My private affairs also took up a good deal of time. I had a farm at Ascott-under-Wychwood which, though let, required supervision, and the property at Higham included a good many cottages—a form of property always involving a lot of business and correspondence in connexion with repairs, especially to a more or less absentee landlord. But in 1923 I sold Higham to my brother and was relieved from further responsibility in this matter.

These were very full but nevertheless very happy years. I worked from nine to one every morning, and from five to seven-thirty in the afternoons always, and there were constantly other bits of work which had to be got in at odd times in the afternoon, and often college activities in which I had to take part in the evenings. I rarely had a free week-end, W.E.A. and Labour Party meetings being always held on Saturday afternoons and sometimes even on Sundays. College business was not finished with at the end of the term, and until July 1921 I had hardly any holiday entirely free from college affairs. My recreations consisted in a short afternoon walk, often in the company of a student or a member of the staff, but sometimes with friends in the university, the reading aloud of novels by my wife when we got a free evening, and an occasional concert or theatre.

I enjoyed the work very much, but it was of course a great strain. For the first six months after the college reopened I was, as I have said, combining with my work some very tiring eye treatment, and by the Easter Vacation of 1920 I was so much exhausted that a doctor whom I consulted urged me to take the Summer Term off, warning me that otherwise I might have a complete breakdown. However, I disregarded his advice, but dropped the eye treatment, and soon got back to normal health. At that time I consulted another oculist, and was again told that there was nothing to be done for me. So I gave up worrying about my eyes. However, I never ceased to realize that my blindness was a terrible handicap. It made me a much slower worker than other people, as everything had to be read aloud to me. I have always had a good memory, but so much work involved a great strain upon it, and my verbal memory has always been poor. In many ways I was less capable of doing things for myself than men who have always been totally blind and who have been brought up as blind persons. I was therefore very much dependent on other people, and but for the help of my wife and my secretary could not have accomplished as much as I did during these years.

I am afraid it may appear from the account of my activities given in this chapter that the college was a somewhat one-man affair, but this was by no means the case. I had a most excellent and loyal staff of tutors who were quite as keen on the college as I was, and they did all in their power to lighten my labours and to make things easy for me. The college secretary, 'Ferdie' Smith (as he is always called) was an old friend brought up with me in the precept constantly inculcated by Miss Giles: 'Remember, whatever you are doing, it must be college first.' He never minded how long or how hard he worked, and I shall always feel I owe him a debt of gratitude for the help he gave me in countless ways. 'College first' was, I think, the watchword of us all in those days.

Apart from a short holiday in Belgium in the summer of 1920 and the longer summer holiday in 1921 referred to, which we spent in Brittany, down to January 1922 we spent at Chesnut Close most of what little time we could now spare from the college. The time in Brittany was a great success. We went

to a little fishing-village called Port Blanc near Lannion, which was a favourite haunt of Laurence Binyon. We had intended staying there a few days and then going on for a tour throughout Brittany. But we were extremely tired, the weather was very hot and lovely, and we liked the place so much that we remained at Port Blanc the whole six weeks. Laurence Binyon had given us an introduction to André Chevrillon, who had a charming villa there, and he and his family made us very welcome and added much to the pleasure of our holiday. He had a little boat in which he took us about the very rocky and dangerous coast. Through the Chevrillons we also made friends with Anatole le Braz, the well-known authority on Breton history and tradition. He was a most charming companion, and we spent many afternoons in his delightful house listening to him while he talked about the customs of the country and the people he knew so well. The little hotel at Port Blanc is practically on the beach, and we spent a good deal of time in the sea, I taking once more to swimming. I enjoyed it very much, but I found it did not suit me, and had reluctantly to give it up. However, much of the days we spent lying on the beach without hats, shoes, or stockings, sometimes sleeping, more often my wife reading aloud, talking to the fisher-folk, and altogether it was the most perfect holiday we had had since before the War.

We went to Belgium a second time in the summer of 1922, not for a holiday, but to attend the first International Conference on Working-Class Education, which was held at the Belgian Labour College near Brussels. It had been arranged by Henri de Man, the then principal of the college, and several countries were represented, the Ruskin College representatives being Ferdie Smith and myself. The conference lasted several days, and involved many lengthy discussions with translations; the meetings were not very pleasant in the great heat. I of course took an active part in the proceedings, and moved a resolution that the International Federation of Trade Unions should be asked to take up the whole question of working-class education. This suggestion was carried out, and the Federation called a second conference, which was held at Ruskin College in 1924. But this so far has been the last conference of

the kind to be called—a pity, I think, as there were possibilities of bringing the workers from different countries closer together through education. However, perhaps the World Association for Adult Education is filling the gap.

In 1920 my wife had been made the first woman Labour J.P. for Oxford city, and her work in this connexion added to our difficulty in being long away from Oxford. So early in 1922, finding that we could not make enough use of Chesnut Close to justify us in incurring the expense of keeping it up, we let it for five years, and bought a small house just outside Oxford on Boar's Hill, where we spent occasional week-ends and most of our holidays during the next year.



AVERIL SANDERSON FURNISS

Taken at Sydney, 1924

XVI

AUSTRALIA

IN January 1923 I had a bad attack of influenza. As soon as I was well enough we went to Brighton, but only for a week, as just before I started our lady tutor at the college had to go away for an operation. Her teaching was mainly in Economics, and it became necessary for me to take over the greater part of her work in addition to my own. I struggled on through the Spring Term, but when the Easter holiday came I was still suffering from the after-effects of influenza, and we went out to St. Jean de Luz for three weeks with the object of getting some sunshine. We had a very enjoyable holiday in the delightful Pyrenees country, but I was not equal to many expeditions, and apart from a day in San Sebastian, one or two days in Biarritz, and a few short drives to neighbouring villages, we spent most of the time sitting by the sea at St. Jean reading novels. I came back much better, but before the end of the Summer Term I broke down again, and had to leave three weeks before the Long Vacation began. My doctor then ordered me to Harrogate, and after that I was to go to the east coast. Various places were suggested, but I remembered spending a delightful holiday when a boy at Filey on the Yorkshire coast, and to Filey I decided to go. We were fortunate in being able to rent a very comfortable house on the cliff about two miles to the south of the town, and there we spent all August and September. We were very much pleased with Filey, which had hardly altered at all since I had been there before in 1881; in fact, I should think there are few sea-side places which have altered so little in so long a time.

I was very glad to be in Yorkshire again, and felt wonderfully at home there. Whether my family's long connexion with Yorkshire had anything to do with this I do not know. I have always had pleasant recollections of the holidays I spent as a child at my grandfather's house near Sheffield, and possibly my

familiarity with Yorkshire people as a boy may have helped to make it easy for me to get on well with Yorkshiremen in after-life. At any rate, I have always felt extraordinarily at my ease amongst Yorkshire people, and I generally found I understood Ruskin students who came from the north of England much better than I did those who came from the south.

On the whole, I got slowly better at Filey, but towards the end of the time I became subject to rather alarming attacks of giddiness, for which I could not account. Before leaving Oxford I had had a long talk with Henry Gillett, who was not only my doctor, but also an intimate friend, and much interested in the college. He had told me that I should have to take life much more easily, and was quite emphatic that, if I were to continue my work as principal, I must no longer live in the college. Absolute quiet at home and restful nights were, he said, essential, and there must be some hours of each day when complete freedom from the college atmosphere could be assured.

This was of course a great blow to both of us. We had thoroughly enjoyed our lives in the college, and we still felt convinced that the principal ought to live on the spot. However, it had not occurred to me at this time that I might not be strong enough to go on with the work, so I decided to do what I knew to be only the second best and to live within easy walking distance of Ruskin. This plan was made possible by the kindness of Barratt Brown, the vice-principal, who, on hearing of my difficulty, at once agreed to move himself and his family from his charming house on Cumnor Hill to the principal's lodgings. This meant a real sacrifice to him, for he had young children. My wife went down from Filey to look for a house in Oxford, and, after some difficulty, found one in Bardwell Road, about a mile from the college. The house was rather bigger than we required, but houses were scarce in those days, and it had a large and most attractive old garden. Our little house on Boar's Hill had ceased under the new conditions to be of any use to us, as it was beyond easy walking distance of the college, and we did not want to start a car.

We were very reluctant to leave Filey; however, at the end of September we moved into 1 Bardwell Road. I walked down

to Ruskin every morning—sometimes with great difficulty, as I often became so giddy that I had to stop and lean against railings. But I was always hoping that these attacks would pass off; and I was able to carry on my teaching work, though I had to sit down while lecturing, as I found that standing brought on the giddiness. Gillett became really anxious about me, and took me to another doctor, who said that I might be suffering from neurasthenia, but that he strongly suspected Menière's disease, and told my wife that if he were right I should remain permanently giddy and should gradually become stone deaf. I was given what was said to be the only remedy for Menière's disease, but after reaching the maximum dose was no better. Gillett, who of course knew me very well, had always inclined to the neurasthenia idea, and he finally sent me to London to consult Sir William Hale White, a son of the writer always known as Mark Rutherford. Hale White gave me a careful examination, and, although he admitted the possibility of Menière's disease, he agreed with Gillett that it was more likely to be an acute form of neurasthenia—a term which seems to cover anything from shop-lifting to insanity! He rather staggered me by saying that the only real cure was a long sea-voyage—'The longest you can take'. He told my wife privately that if it were, as he thought, neurasthenia, the attacks would begin to pass off after the first fortnight at sea, but that if I still remained giddy it would probably mean Menière's disease. I was at first very much averse to the idea of a long voyage, which would mean another break in my work, and in my nervous state I had almost begun to think that the college could not get on without me. But I really knew that I was totally unfit to carry on, and my wife and Gillett soon persuaded me to adopt Hale White's suggestion. I have always been devoted to the sea, and by the day after my visit to Hale White we were making inquiries about sailings to Australia. The governing council gave me a term's leave of absence, and we began to make preparations for our departure on the new P. and O. ship *Mooltan*, which was to sail on December 21st 1923 and make its first voyage to Australia.

Neurasthenia is a curious illness. I had no sooner decided to give up my work and to cease worrying about it than I began

to feel better. It is true that a course of massage may have helped, but, at any rate, by the time we set off I was better than I had been for some months past. Vera, our adopted niece, was at college, and we did not want to break into her time there, so we decided to take with us Evelyn Jones, who had helped to look after me all the time I was ill, as my wife—mistakenly, as it turned out—thought herself to be a bad sailor. I had a most kind send-off from the college, the students and staff giving me a farewell tea at which many Oxford friends were present. We went up to London the night before we sailed, where my brother gave a farewell dinner, to which he also invited the Charlie Nicholls. They all, with Vera, came down to Tilbury the next morning in a snowstorm to see us off.

We ran into summer weather in the Bay of Biscay. I slept most of the day and night, and after the first week my giddiness began to pass off, and we were able to realize that there was no longer any fear of Menière's disease. We had from first to last a most perfect voyage. There were some delightful people on board, we had plenty of books, and my wife, contrary to her expectations, proved herself a very good sailor, and that in spite of the fact that we had a very rough time in the Gulf of Lyons. We only got into Marseilles Harbour just in time to avoid a most unpleasant experience. The storm became so bad that for twenty-four hours no ship could make the harbour, and even inside we were in some danger of damage, for during the night a large cargo steamer broke her moorings and drifted about, to the great alarm of those responsible for the ships anchored in the harbour.

Friendships are soon made on board a ship, and we were a very jolly party at the captain's table, the captain himself being a most friendly and genial man, though at first for some reason I could not understand, a little cold and distant with me. Owing to some mistake I was put down in the passenger list as 'Professor', and this title, in spite of my efforts to repudiate it, stuck to me, not only during the voyages to and from Australia, but all the time I was there. The captain always addressed me as 'Professor', and one day I asked him why he did so. 'Well, aren't you a professor?' he said, and when I told him I was nothing so bad as that, he shook hands with me delightedly,

saying that he had thought I was one of those 'highbrow fellows'. Human relations were then at once established, drinks were stood and cigars exchanged. It is astonishing what fear and shyness people who are engaged in academic pursuits and who are thought to be intellectual seem to inspire in the minds of practical men who are carrying on some of the most important work of the world. The work the captain was doing was quite as important and probably much more useful than mine as an economist, and he doubtless knew more about economics than I could ever hope to learn of navigation. And yet, until he knew that I was not a professor and that he could stand me a drink with impunity, he regarded me as too 'brainy' and almost impossible as a companion!

As I have said, friendships are easily made on board ship, but as a rule few become permanent. We, however, were fortunate on this voyage in making some friends of whom we were to see a good deal in after years. Sitting opposite to us at the captain's table was a Mr. W. R. Snow, with whom we soon found we had much in common. He was the father of Miss Jessie Snow, the leader of the Snow Quartet, and was himself much interested in music. Though a Liberal by tradition, he had strong Labour sympathies, and soon after he returned to London he became a supporter of the Labour Party—a change of views for which we like to think we were not entirely blameless. We always saw him when we were in London in subsequent years, and he often took us out to dinner and to a theatre, or entertained us in his beautiful house in Regent's Park. He took quite a lively interest in politics, and once accompanied us to the House of Commons to have tea with Lees-Smith, who had invited Macdonald to meet him. He was to me a very interesting man. A most successful business career and considerable wealth had left him entirely simple-hearted, with a mind quite free from the commercial outlook in the narrower and harder sense of the term, and with great sympathy for those who had been less fortunate than himself. It was a great grief to us to hear of his sudden death in 1928 at Colombo, where we had spent our time on shore with him and had first come to know him well. Other friends were Mr. and Mrs. Leigh Atkinson, Australians, who curiously enough had

recently bought a place near Oxford and who we were delighted to find our near neighbours when we returned to England.

In the course of the voyage I also made a new little girl friend. At Aden it was rather rough in the harbour, and I heard that the landing there would be awkward for me, but some of our fellow-passengers were anxious that my wife should join their party and see something of the place. Although she was reluctant to leave me alone on board all the evening, I finally persuaded her to go. While I was sitting in the lounge reading some novel in Braille, a little girl came up to me and said : ' I thought you seemed to look rather lonely. Do you mind if I come and talk to you ? ' I did not mind, and we passed a very pleasant evening together. She was only seventeen ; but as she had lived in Australia, England, and America, she had already seen a good deal of the world, and was a most amusing and interesting companion. Many girls of her age, I think, like to do kindly actions of this sort for older people, but it requires courage and a lack of self-consciousness, and few would have taken the plunge and made the advance in such a friendly and unaffected way. We have written to each other at frequent intervals ever since. At the time I am writing she is in England, and has been to stay with us in Oxford.

I had of course intended to lead a perfectly quiet life while we were in Australia, but through a paragraph in the *Daily Herald* the Australian Press learned that I was coming out, and that I was connected with the British Labour Party. We happened to arrive at Fremantle on January 23rd 1924, the very day that Ramsay Macdonald took office, and before I had turned out of my bunk a reporter knocked at my cabin door, demanding an interview. He insisted on staying with me while I dressed, asking all sorts of questions about the Labour Party, and wanting to know exactly what Macdonald and the Labour Government were going to do with regard to almost every conceivable political issue. I cannot remember what I told him, nor should I like to confess to the number and scope of the undertakings to which I committed Macdonald ! The same sort of thing happened at Adelaide and Melbourne, but by the time we got to Sydney I had become more wary, and refused to be interviewed until I landed. However, even this did not

keep me altogether clear of reporters on the ship, for an enterprising Press-man asked me to go on to the bridge, saying that the captain wanted to see me. This was entirely untrue, for when we arrived we found the captain very much fussed and annoyed with the reporter, being naturally busy with all sorts of details on our arrival in port. The reporter, however, nothing daunted, whipped out a camera and announced that he intended to take a photograph of the professor saying good-bye to the captain! 'Captain, grasp the Professor's hand', he demanded, and the thing was done, the touching farewell scene being reproduced in most of the evening papers!

When we arrived at our hotel in Sydney I was greeted by the porter with the announcement that eight reporters were waiting to see 'the Professor'. They all had 'morning tea' with us, but they insisted on interviewing me separately, so the business took up a good deal of the morning. Once more they wanted to know exactly what the Labour Government was going to do, and they also professed a great interest in Ruskin College. After that interviewing me became a sort of habit with the Australian Press, and I was seized upon by reporters wherever I went until at Adelaide on the return voyage I gave my last farewell message to Australia. My wife, too, was interviewed by many women reporters anxious to learn all they could about women's movements in England and what part women were taking in new political developments.

We were met not only by reporters at our ports of call in Australia; at Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney, and afterwards at Brisbane and Hobart, we found leading members of the Labour Movement on the quays waiting to give us a welcome and full of arrangements for enabling us not only to see as much as possible during our stay, but also to become acquainted with all the many questions affecting labour in Australia.

Mr. and Mrs. Mansbridge had been out in 1913, and had in the course of a six months' tour aroused a remarkable enthusiasm for the W.E.A. in many parts of the country. By 1924 it had taken firm root in all the large cities. The W.E.A. people got wind of my arrival, and at Adelaide I was met with a telegram asking me to undertake a series of lectures. This I

was obliged to decline ; but whilst we were in the country my wife and I addressed W.E.A. meetings at Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Hobart. I was asked by the New Zealand W.E.A. to come over and give a course of lectures there, and have always regretted that I could not take this opportunity of seeing something of New Zealand. But it was impossible, as I had only been given one term off, and was due back in England at the end of April.

We were quickly brought into touch with organizations and associations of all kinds, and received from them many invitations to speak. I had of course been forbidden to do public work of any kind, so I had to decline most of these invitations, including a request that I should preach in a church. My wife did a good deal of public speaking. Looking back in old diaries we seem to have lived in a whirl of meetings, visits to public institutions, parties, and entertainments of all kinds—all very pleasant but not exactly in line with my doctor's prescription. We made many friends in Sydney, and were everywhere most hospitably entertained. I especially remember delightful afternoons and evenings with our friends Jerry Portous¹ and his wife, with R. C. Mills,² with the Duncan Halls,³ F. A. Bland,⁴ W. A. Holman,⁵ and many others, including two old Ruskin students, Jones and Wilcox, who rushed round to our hotel on the evening of our arrival, having seen our names in the paper.

I discussed with many people both the tariff question and the White Australia question, or perhaps it would be better to say that I tried to, for on both these subjects I found most people obdurate. These were settled questions, and not to be argued about, and the Labour people were the most obdurate of all. I did occasionally come across a Free Trader, as well as people who had their doubts about the White Australia policy, but they were very few and far between. One good example of the results of Protection comes back to me. It is well known

¹ G. V. Portous, Director of Tutorial Classes and Lecturer in Economic History in the University of Sydney.

² R. C. Mills, Professor of Economics in the University of Sydney.

³ H. Duncan Hall, University of Sydney, author of *The British Commonwealth of Nations*.

⁴ F. Armand Bland, University of Sydney.

⁵ The Hon. W. A. Holman, formerly Premier of New South Wales.

that the Sydney people wear thick, dark clothes even in the hot weather, and when I was there in the middle of a particularly hot summer it was not considered the thing to walk about the city even without a waistcoat. I asked a friend why they did not wear flannels or cotton suits. He said that the reason was that Sydney was a very dirty place, and that laundering was expensive, which was true. I then asked why they could not wear thin cloth, and he said : ' Because our people can't make thin cloth that will last. If it is going to wear at all, it must be thick. Of course we do import some thin cloth, but owing to the duty hardly any of us can afford to buy it.' Notwithstanding its drawbacks, some of which they recognized, the Australians clung to their tariff with a sort of religious fervour, and some people even appeared to think that England was on her last legs because of her obstinate attachment to Free Trade.

I remember talking about the White Australia policy to a very distinguished man filling a high and important position. I suggested that the time might come when the Japanese would be determined to force their way into Australia, and that war might be the result of attempting to keep them out. England would be expected to come in on the side of Australia, and the thing might easily develop into another world war. He replied : ' There might be worse things than another world war, and one of them is a Yellow Australia.'

We stayed in Sydney for a few days, but the heat became so intense that we decided to go across to Manley, a small sea-side place at the mouth of the harbour looking over the Pacific, and only half an hour's run by steamer from the city. Here we spent many quiet days when our engagements did not take us into Sydney, and the nights were very cool and pleasant. Parliament was not in session, but we met several of the New South Wales Labour politicians. Mr. Lang¹ kindly arranged a luncheon for us at the Parliament House, and invited to meet us several of the leading members of the then opposition and their wives.

We left Sydney on March 1st, going by boat to Brisbane in terrifically hot weather. Here again were the usual reporters, and we were at once visited by B. H. Molesworth of the W.E.A.,

¹ The Hon. J. T. Lang, afterwards Premier of New South Wales.

by representatives of the Labour Government, and by others, including Chief Justice McCawley, with whom we made great friends. He was one of the outstanding figures in Queensland, and his early and sudden death the following year was a great loss to the country. The Labour Government, which had then been in office for nine years, gave us a particularly warm welcome. Cars were placed at our disposal all the time we were in Brisbane, and on the day after our arrival we lunched at Parliament House with Mr. McCormick, Minister of Lands, and Mr. Gillies, Acting Premier in the absence of Mr. Theodore, who had gone to England. I was very sorry not to have the opportunity of meeting Theodore, of whom of course we heard much wherever we went, and to whose initiative Queensland owes much of her up-to-date social legislation. McCormick was exceedingly proud of the fact that the Labour Government had abolished the Second Chamber, and showed us the highly-decorated room 'in which that effete body had formerly sat'. We saw a good deal of Mr. Huxham,¹ Minister of Education, and his charming wife, in whose death, shortly afterwards in England, Queensland again suffered an irreparable loss. My wife spent a wonderful morning with her and Mrs. Gillies, visiting the State Clinic and one of the newly socialized hospitals. All the well-known arguments against State hospitals as compared with the voluntary system seem to be refuted by every aspect of the work as carried on in this excellent hospital. My wife had some private talk with the matron, who had been in charge before the State took it over, and asked her in course of conversation how her work under a State department compared with her position under a voluntary committee. The matron at once said that her position was entirely different, because—for the first time in her experience—she was allowed full scope for initiative. My wife was also much struck by the freedom and the essentially human relationships existing between staff and patients. There were certainly no signs of what is often called 'the paralysing hand of bureaucracy'.

We had a delightful luncheon with Sir Matthew Nathan, Governor of Queensland, in his beautiful house on a hill overlooking the city, and a supper with the W.E.A. When we left

¹ Afterwards Agent-General for Queensland.

Brisbane it was with feelings of real regret and a strong desire to return there some day. As we were standing on the quay on the point of going on board the ship which was to take us back to Sydney I met another old Ruskin College student, who pleased me very much by telling me that though, while he was at the college, he had thought the economics I taught him quite useless and absurd, he had since found his notes of my lectures very valuable. Just as the ship was about to sail there was a commotion on the quay, a car came dashing up, and Mrs. Huxham and some other ladies appeared with an enormous scarlet bouquet and a large decanter of eau-de-Cologne, a present to my wife from the Labour women of Queensland. Our regrets at leaving Brisbane were not lessened by the fact that we ran into a very heavy swell which lasted all the two days' voyage; in fact, on the first day one other man and myself had the deck and the saloon entirely to ourselves.

After another two days at Sydney we set off on our homeward voyage. The *Ulysses* fortunately called at Hobart, Tasmania, which gave us an opportunity of seeing this delightful little city and its surroundings, and of meeting more W.E.A. and Labour friends. I was particularly glad to see there my old friend J. B. Bridgen, whom I had known in Oxford in his undergraduate days, and whom in 1921 I had invited to become vice-principal of Ruskin College. He was now a lecturer in Hobart University, and we spent two very pleasant days with him and his wife.

We had stayed two days at Melbourne on our way out, and owing to the kindness of Mr. Cameron, one of our fellow-passengers on the *Mooltan*, we had seen a good deal of the city. Mr. Cameron was chairman of the Melbourne Tramways Committee, and he and his wife had just returned from a world tour on which he had been sent for the purpose of inspecting tramway systems. Although he had only just arrived home, and was naturally extremely busy, the day after we landed he came down to our hotel in his car and spent the whole morning taking us round. On our return to Melbourne we saw more of the Camerons, who were exceedingly kind to us, taking us about a great deal, and even offering to put their car at our disposal during the whole of our three days' visit. My

recollection of those three days at Melbourne is a succession of parties, lunches, teas, and dinners, and a great deal of talking. We were entertained by some of the university people at a very pleasant afternoon party, where we met among others Sir David Masson (son of Dr. Masson of Edinburgh, author of the well-known life of Milton), who had just resigned his professorship of chemistry and who, with Lady Masson, was to sail with us to England on the *Ulysses*.

On our first visit to Melbourne we had met and made friends with J. P. Jones, a well-known Labour politician, who had been a member of the former Victoria Labour Government. He was a friend of most of our English Labour people, and we had been given introductions to him. We had not seen much of him on our way out, but as soon as we arrived in Melbourne this time he came to invite us to a dinner-party which he and Mrs. Jones were giving for us. Most of the members of the former Labour Government were present with their wives, as well as several leading Socialists, and we were about forty guests in all. Jones was so anxious that we should hear something of all sides of the movement that he had even invited some Communists, who, owing to his great popularity in all quarters, were able to be fitted into the party on the friendliest terms. I think I have never heard so many speeches at one dinner! There were at least ten without counting ours. Every detail of Victorian Labour activities was explained to us, and we were of course expected to give as much information as we could about our Labour Party. I was particularly struck by the keenness of these people, and by the friendly and united spirit which seemed to exist amongst them. After dinner we talked much of education, in which they were all greatly interested. Jones was a great admirer of Ruskin, the man, and he also knew all about Ruskin, the college. He had called his Melbourne house 'Ruskin Hall' and his place in the country 'Ruskin Park'. He told me that he was thinking of turning Ruskin Park into a college on the lines of Ruskin College, and said he would like me to come out and take charge of it—a tempting invitation. As usual, there was a W.E.A. function just before we sailed, and a large party of friends came to see us off.

As we were going back by the Cape, Adelaide was our last

port of call in Australia. Here we were again most hospitably entertained by several friends, especially by Professor and Mrs. Darnley Naylor.¹ We had our final W.E.A. meeting, and I said good-bye to my last reporter, giving him at his urgent request a farewell message to Australia in which I defended the abandonment of the Singapore base by our Labour Government, and spoke somewhat unkindly of the tariff.

All through our visit we were very much struck by the eagerness of the Australian people to learn as much as possible about England, her political development, her educational system, her methods of administering justice—everything, in fact, which could give them a picture of English life. We gathered a general impression that many of the most active and keen Australian citizens realized the isolation of their position on the map, far away from the centre of the Empire of which they felt themselves to be so intimately a part. We were both extremely sorry to leave Australia, where we had received untold kindnesses and which we very much hope to see again some day.

I think I have never enjoyed three weeks on the sea as much as I did the voyage from Adelaide to Durban. We of course saw no land, and I only remember our passing one ship. We were in latitude 30 all the way, and day after day passed in what seemed like a perfect English June. The voyage from the Cape to Australia is not, I believe, so satisfactory, as the ships take a course much farther south, getting near the 'icy forties', and it is likely to be cold and rough. We were most fortunate in our travelling companions; the day after we left Melbourne, Sir David Masson suggested that we should join him and Lady Masson at a table for four in the dining-saloon. I think we all realized that we were taking a risk in deciding to have our meals together during the whole of a seven weeks' voyage, but, from our point of view at least, the experiment turned out to be the greatest possible success. We could not have had more charming and interesting companions. Sir David was a pronounced Tory, and we had many political discussions, Lady Masson, who Sir David regarded as 'quite unsound', generally holding the balance. These discussions

¹ H. Darnley Naylor, Professor of Classics in the University of Adelaide.

were most amusing, and though of course they left us all exactly where we started, we all enjoyed them, and would not have left our table for four on any consideration. In spite of having spent most of their lives in Australia, Sir David and Lady Masson were thoroughly cosmopolitan in their outlook. They were full of interests, and both possessed a most delightful vein of humour. We used to lend one another books, and Lady Masson read aloud to me a good deal—one of the books being *Robinson Crusoe*, which I had never read since I was a little boy, but which we both very much enjoyed. We ourselves of course did a great deal of reading. I remember Trevelyan's *Life of Macaulay*, some Henry James, Henry Ford's *Story of My Life*, Jacks' *Realities and Shams*, several books on Australia, and some detective stories.

There were a great many young people on board, mostly Australians, and, as usual, all sorts of entertainments were arranged. My wife made friends with a Miss Beatrice McDonald, and got up with her some scenes from *Pride and Prejudice*. These they acted in some peril on the slowly rolling saloon stairs, which they had to use as a stage! Then there was the fancy-dress ball, in which I found myself involved. I had made friends with one of the saloon stewards, who had formerly been an actor, and who knew all about make-up. He very skilfully turned me out as the most ruffianly pirate, in a greasy curling wig and a suit borrowed from a sailor, a pistol at my belt and a whisky bottle under my arm. I rather enjoyed rolling round the deck in this guise, but I was very much surprised when I was awarded the first prize. I have always regarded this as one of the greatest triumphs of my life. I at once found myself a sort of hero among some of my ship-mates, with whom I had not before had much in common, and, had I accepted all the offers which were made me, I would have been kept in drinks and cigars all the rest of the way home. My imaginary professorship counted as nothing when compared to my success as a pirate!

We had a good deal of music on board, and there were one or two real artists among the passengers, especially a young girl who, though quite untrained, was one of the most beautiful singers I have ever heard, and who used to sing to me many of

my favourite songs. She was going to England to be trained, and I trembled to think of what the results might be, for she was one of those very rare 'natural' singers. At Durban we had two days, but it was so hot that we had not the energy to do much sightseeing. We did go for one ride in rickshaws—a thing I shall never do again. The Zulus of course appear to be magnificent men, but to many of them drawing rickshaws means an early death from heart-disease—a fact that is not as well known as it should be. And, anyhow, the practice seemed to both of us degrading and disgusting.

With Cape Town and its surroundings we both immediately fell in love. It was Good Friday when we arrived, so everything was shut up. However, we went for the usual drive round the coast in the beautiful country we were to know much better later on, and made up our minds then and there that we must see more of South Africa.

Our arrival at Liverpool was rather an anticlimax after my experiences as a Professor and Labour Leader in Australia. There were no reporters—not even a friend to meet us on the quay, and only one telegram—which never reached us. Although it was May 9th it was bitterly cold, and everything seemed most unpropitious. Nevertheless I realized, perhaps for the first time, all that England meant to me.

XVII

RESIGNATION AND AFTER

MY time in Australia was so strenuous that when I left I was not as much better as I had hoped to be. However, the voyage home did me so much good that I felt quite equal to again taking up my work at Ruskin, and did manage a pretty hard term. While I had been away a plan had been set on foot by the General Council of the Trade Union Congress with the object of bringing together under a single educational scheme the W.E.A., Ruskin College, the National Council of Labour Colleges (N.C.L.C.), and the Labour College. The N.C.L.C. was a body which had been built up by the Plebs League a few years previously with the object of grouping under a representative council various so-called Labour 'colleges' which had been established in different parts of the country. The only Labour college which could be strictly thus described was that which had been started in London after the split which took place at Ruskin in 1909. The other N.C.L.C. 'colleges' were non-residential and did not amount to more than classes of varying size and permanence.

Had it been accomplished this attempt of the Trade Union Congress to bring together the various bodies engaged in working-class education would have been a great achievement. But the thing was hopeless from the outset. The differences in point of view were too great to be reconciled, for, to put it quite succinctly, the W.E.A. and Ruskin College stood for education, the N.C.L.C. and the Labour College for propaganda. I, as Principal of Ruskin, was of course involved in the negotiations, and they gave me a great deal of worry and anxiety on the top of my ordinary work. By the end of the term I was beginning to feel the strain, and was very glad to get away for a holiday.

While we had been in Filey in 1923 we had become very

much attached to the place. I found the air wonderfully invigorating, and Filey was far enough away from Oxford to make it possible to shake off work altogether and so ensure a complete holiday. We had found, adjoining the house which we rented for the summer, a small plot of vacant land, and on this we decided to build a little house. This was begun just before we went to Australia, and when we got back it was ready for us. It is about two miles south of Filey, looking over the sea, in the middle of the great bay bounded on the north by the celebrated Filey Brig and on the south by the great cliffs of Flamborough Head. A little valley runs down for half a mile between the cliffs to the shore, where five miles of smooth yellow sand stretch from end to end of the bay. Filey, as I have said, is still a very quiet place, almost unknown to the 'tripper', and Primrose Valley is a very peaceful little haven.

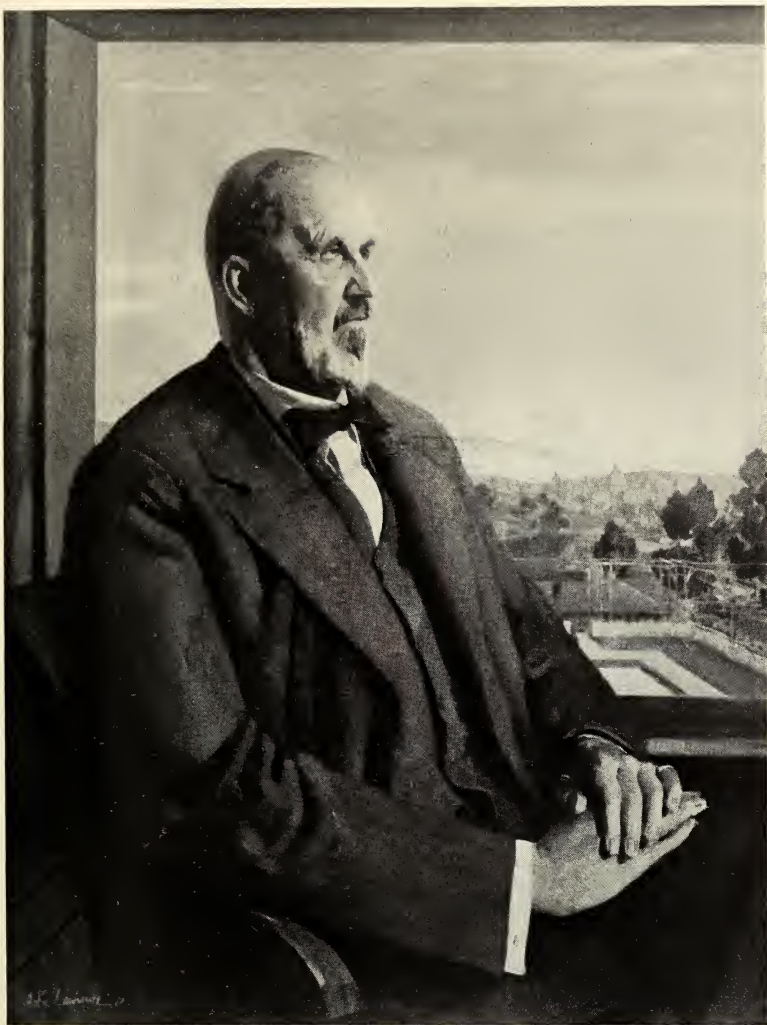
As soon as term was over we settled into St. Illtyd's Cottage, looking forward to a most restful holiday before going back to work in October. But though the air and the quiet life had their usual beneficial effect, I, to my great disappointment, realized that the term's work had tried me more than I knew. Slight signs of neurasthenia again showed themselves, and at length, after much deliberation and much discussion with my friends, I felt it my duty to resign. I now think that I was perhaps foolish not to have taken a year instead of only a term to recover from my illness, and that, if I had done so, I might have been able to go on. However, I was fifty-six, and had worked for eighteen years at or for the college. My experience of living outside had more than ever convinced me that the Principal of Ruskin College must live on the spot, and I knew that I should never again be well enough to stand the strain this involved. Quite apart from all this, perhaps the time had come for me to make way for a younger and stronger man.

In October 1924, therefore, I sent in my resignation. I had been treated with the greatest consideration by the Governing Council of the College during my illness, and they now begged me to reconsider the matter, asking me to stay on as principal and offering to lighten my work. But I felt strongly that the

work of a principal of Ruskin College could not be delegated to others, and that if I could not do *all* the work which I felt properly fell to the principal, it would be best for the college that I should go. My resignation therefore took effect in April 1925. I was given a testimonial subscribed for by students past and present, members of the Governing Council and other friends of the college, and in addition by the General Council of the Trade Union Congress. This testimonial took the form of a portrait of myself painted by A. K. Lawrence.

My resignation as Principal of Ruskin College brought to an end a very interesting, happy, and I believe the most useful period of my life. I had hoped to go on until I was sixty-five, as I had made several new departures in the working of the college, and wanted to watch their development. I was also anxious to set on foot various new experiments which I had in mind. In fact, my whole life for years past had been almost entirely bound up with the college, and my resignation created for me a gap which at first it seemed almost impossible to fill. It was with something like a feeling of despair that I realized that the college and I were to go our separate ways. But the break was made at the right time. Had I stayed on it is probable that I should have broken down altogether, and have become unfit for any work at all. And it is always better to retire gracefully when you are asked to stay on than to wait until you are asked to go !

At one time we thought of leaving Oxford and settling in London, for to be near Ruskin and yet not to be of it seemed intolerable to both of us. But we had lived in Oxford so long and had so many friends there that we saw it would be foolish to move away. Though I had given up Ruskin I had no intention of regarding myself as permanently invalided. I had always had a great deal of educational work on hand quite apart from the college, and to some of this I was glad to be able to devote more time. I was still a member of the University Tutorial Classes Joint Committee, which in 1925 became part of the new Delegacy for Extra-Mural Studies, a development which led to a considerable extension of the work of the committee. The Delegacy in this year made a new departure in extra-mural work by bringing up to Oxford students from



HENRY SANDERSON FURNISS, 1925
Presentation Portrait by A. K. Lawrence

the Tutorial Classes. They were provided with scholarships, exempted from Responsions, and given senior standing, which enabled them to read for an Honours degree in two years. This was a very important departure, as it opened a new avenue for working men and women to the university. Hitherto of course there had always been a small sprinkling of working-class students at the colleges who had come through the secondary schools, but it now became possible for the first time for young men and women who had left school at fourteen, who had spent several years in industry, and who had come to feel the need of further education, to take an Honours course at Oxford as adult students. That they had spent three years in a Tutorial Class ensured that they were equipped to take such a course and to profit by a university education.

The presence of Ruskin College in Oxford, as well as the work of the Tutorial Classes, had played an important part in bringing about this reform. The success of the Ruskin students in the Diploma examination had shown that working men and women could hold their own with middle-class undergraduates in at least one field of knowledge, and this no doubt influenced the university to change its curriculum in a direction which would make it more accessible to working-class students. A new school of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics ('Modern Greats') had been established, for which a knowledge of Latin and Greek was not required. This school (with an exemption from Responsions and Moderations) is well within the reach of the more capable students from the Tutorial Classes.

I have explained in a former chapter that a University Joint Committee consists of an equal number of representatives of the university and of the W.E.A. The Oxford Joint Committee has always included among its W.E.A. representatives two members of the General Council of the Trade Union Congress, and, when the Joint Committee became part of the Delegacy for Extra-Mural Studies, what would have been regarded a few years before as a revolution took place, for the chairman and another member of the General Council of the Trade Union Congress took their seats on an Oxford Delegacy. The workers had begun to take their share in the control of the university.

In this year (1925) I was put on to the Scholarship Committee of the Joint Committee, a sub-committee which selected the adult students from a long list of candidates. I was also asked to act as Supervisor to the students who were selected each year—not a very onerous task, involving little beyond getting to know them, giving advice when it was required, and making them welcome at our house. This has been a great pleasure to us, as it has meant that our departure from Ruskin has by no means cut us adrift from young working-class students.

I remained a member of the Committee for Economics, and about this time represented the Committee on the Social Training Committee at Barnett House—a social centre established in 1914 in memory of the late Canon Barnett. The Social Training course had been arranged in connexion with the Diploma for Economics and Political Science, and provides with a course of training and a certificate students who have taken the Diploma and who wish to take up social work.

In addition to these university activities I was, as always, busy with the W.E.A. The South-Eastern District, for which I had acted as secretary during the War and afterwards as vice-chairman, was reconstituted as regards area in 1924 and became known as the Southern District. It now was to consist of the counties of Oxon, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, and the Isle of Wight, the remaining area being absorbed in other districts. I was elected the first chairman of the new district. Soon after the War the owner of a beautiful old house in Reading known as Holybrook House generously lent it to the W.E.A. to be used as an educational centre. My friend T. W. Price was appointed Warden of the House, and it became a centre for W.E.A. classes of all kinds. But a new development was soon set on foot in the establishment of a yearly two months' summer school at Holybrook House for the training as W.E.A. lecturers of promising students chosen from Tutorial Classes and elsewhere. Holybrook House is managed by a House Committee of which I, as chairman of the Southern District, became Chairman, and I was also appointed to the Board of Studies set up by the Oxford Joint Committee to arrange the curriculum of the summer school. The membership

of these two committees has always been a great pleasure to me, as they give me frequent opportunities of meeting and working with T. W. Price, who has long been one of my most valued friends, and who in fact lived with us for a time at Ruskin when he was engaged on research work in Oxford. With the work of the Delegacy, the adult students, and the W.E.A., I could see ahead of me plenty of opportunities for educational work.

In addition, my wife was much interested in her work as a magistrate and in local political affairs, so there were good reasons why we should stay in Oxford. One change, however, we did decide to make. It would be difficult to find a worse climate than that of Oxford, lying, as it does, low down in the valley of the Thames. But round the city and in its near neighbourhood are delightful hills, and on one of these, Headington Hill, some friends of ours were selling plots of land on their estate. We had never regarded 1 Bardwell Road as anything but a temporary arrangement, and now that there was nothing to make it necessary for us to live in the heart of the city, we determined to make one more experiment in house-building, to the great amusement of our friends, amongst whom our constant removals and building operations had become a sort of standing joke. When in search of a name for the new house we debated the possibility of finding something which would be a link with Ruskin College. 'Why not,' said my friend Barratt Brown, who succeeded me as principal, 'call it "Unto this Last!"' However, we finally contented ourselves with the more prosaic 'North End'.

During my last year at Ruskin I was by no means entirely absorbed with college work. We came back from Australia to find the Labour Government still in office, and we had not been home a month before we were plunged into a by-election in Oxford, which became known as the election of the Blues, the candidates being Kenneth Lindsay, R. C. Bourne, and C. B. Fry. I was not well enough to do any speaking, but I helped in other ways. My wife threw herself into the campaign with great vigour, speaking several times a day at both indoor and outdoor meetings. As Kenneth Lindsay stayed with us during the contest, our house became almost a Labour committee-room.

In October we went up to London for the Labour Party Conference, and I had the good fortune to be one of the little party who were invited by the Prime Minister to dine at 10 Downing Street on the night before the dissolution. It was an extraordinarily interesting occasion. Most of the Cabinet were there, and of course the arguments for and against resignation were fully discussed. In the general election which followed we found ourselves drawn once more into North Oxfordshire politics. The Banbury Division had an excellent candidate in A. E. Monks, but at the last moment he found himself without an agent. My wife, who had had a long experience of election work, was asked to fill the gap, and she acted as agent throughout the election and for some months afterwards. She and her secretary, Miss Butcher, had of course to live most of the time in Banbury, and I went down whenever I could to help, though I only spoke once in public, and this in defiance of doctor's orders. The occasion on which I spoke happened to be the very day on which the Zinovieff letter had been made known. I remember finding it very difficult to know what to say, as there had not been time for the Prime Minister to explain his position with regard to the letter. However, I managed to carry on for about three-quarters of an hour without getting seriously involved, and I must say I very much enjoyed finding myself once more on my feet on a Labour platform. We kept in touch with the Banbury Division all through that winter, and in March 1925, a few days before I left Ruskin College, we both stood as candidates for the Oxfordshire County Council, but with a singular lack of success. During the campaign, however, we made many friends in Banbury and in the villages, and in spite of the apathy existing in rural areas with regard to Local Government, I think we did manage to make some people realize the importance to them of local elections and the desirability of having Labour well represented on the County Council.

Immediately after my resignation in April we set off for a complete change. Our Australian trip had revived my old love of the sea, and my wife, having found herself to be a fair sailor, was almost as keen as I was. So, this time accompanied by

Vera, we set off on the *Arcadian* for a cruise in the Mediterranean. The expedition was in many ways most enjoyable, and a great rest, but I think myself that from the point of view of a sea-lover these cruises are apt to be disappointing on account of the constant stoppages in port. The stoppages are not long enough to give you an opportunity of seeing any place properly, and the ships stop so often that you never get a really long run at sea. Apart from this, for those who really love the sea for itself the ships are overcrowded, though for those who want a gay holiday in a luxurious hotel this is probably all to the good. However, we took our share in some of the amusements of the ship, Vera playing a great deal of deck tennis, on one occasion to her great delight having as partner Lord Harris, the celebrated cricketer, who, though well over seventy, played with the energy and enthusiasm of a boy. I, for the second time in my life, had the proud distinction of winning, with Vera, the first prize at the fancy-dress dinner—appearing as an Italian organ-grinder with Vera as my monkey! After lovely weather in the Mediterranean it became extremely cold on the way home, and my wife, who had set out with a bad cold, developed pleurisy just before we reached England, and came home to a long and tiresome illness.

During the first six months after my resignation I took life very easily, doing hardly any public work at all apart from my W.E.A. committees. I spent a good deal of time over my private affairs, which I had rather neglected in recent years. Chesnut Close had been let for some years, but our present financial position made it impossible for us ever to be able to live there again, so, with great regret, we decided to sell both the house and the farm. After the sale our only link with Ascott-under-Wychwood was the village hall which Reggie Tiddy had built before the War; he had left it to us, and we still retain it in our hands for the village. It is known as the Tiddy Hall, and contains a stone tablet erected in memory of Reggie by the villagers and other friends.

We spent nearly all this summer at Filey, where my wife soon recovered from her illness. I read a good deal of economics in the mornings, but the rest of the day we spent lying on the beach, bathing, and reading aloud many novels—

mostly detective stories, which by this time had become my favourite form of literature. We had several visitors, among them Rachel Sanderson with her husband and little boy. She had in 1921 married Will Hall, who was and still is in charge of finance at the Labour Party headquarters. This marriage had been a real pleasure to us, for a great friendship had grown up between ourselves and Will, and Rachel was an old friend as well as a connexion of mine. Will was at that time candidate for Portsmouth Central, a seat which he triumphantly won in 1929. In September the Trade Union Congress met at Scarborough. Hitherto I had always attended Congress in my capacity as Principal of Ruskin, with the object of doing what propaganda I could for the college. I was now able to be there simply for the pleasure of listening to the discussions and meeting old friends, though I was amused to find that I was still greeted as 'Principal'. We very much enjoyed having as visitors for the Congress, and for a few days after, Arthur Henderson and his wife. The Congress always has one afternoon off in the course of the week, and we arranged for this afternoon a small garden-party, mainly for old Ruskin students who were amongst the delegates. Arthur Henderson had received a most attractive invitation to go with Ramsay Macdonald to tea with one of the Elevens which was playing in the Scarborough Cricket Week. He, however, feeling that we should like him to be present at our party, insisted on coming back to our little house to help us entertain our visitors. The presence of so beloved a Labour leader was of course very much appreciated by us all, and added greatly to the success of the afternoon. The Hendersons and ourselves had a delightful week together and much good political talk. Henderson was during part of the time at work on an important speech which he was to deliver the day after he left us, and I was very much struck by the extreme care and precision which he put into the preparation of this speech; he left nothing for the last moment, and was determined to have every point in the right place and every argument watertight.

We met all our friends again at the Labour Party Conference at Liverpool, after which we went to London for ten days. The object of our visit was the painting of my portrait, and I

sat to A. K. Lawrence every morning and some afternoons. These sittings were not nearly as trying as I had expected ; in fact, they were very enjoyable, for Lawrence discovered that I was fond of music and invited a friend to come and play to me. She was a brilliant musician, and played what *I* regard as the right sort of music—Bach and Mozart. I think Lawrence probably had the idea that this would improve my expression and remove any trace there might be of boredom ! He himself had a fine voice, and would occasionally take a rest from painting and sing to his friend's accompaniment. He also was much interested in political and social questions, and we had many good talks as he worked away at his canvas. Apart from my sittings, we saw a great many old friends and had quite a gay time, attending among other festivities the wedding of my old friend Magda. Just before Christmas we moved into our new house, North End, Headington Hill. The house is at the far end of Pullen's Lane, a lane which takes its name from an old tree which was planted in the seventeenth century by Josiah Pullen, vice-principal of my college—Hertford. It was called ' Joe Pullen's Tree '. I have, however, yet another link with Joe Pullen, for he was chaplain to my ancestor Bishop Sanderson, whose death-bed he attended and whose funeral sermon he preached. We were very much pleased with our new house, which, though only two miles from the centre of Oxford, is practically in the country. How long it will remain so is another matter.

We led a very quiet life all through 1926 at North End, staying there all the time except for our usual three months at Filey in the summer. I worked in the mornings and after tea, and in the afternoons generally went for walks with my wife or with friends, including my old colleagues on the staff of Ruskin College. Edwin Cannan and I have done together most of the walks round Oxford, some of them many times over, and I think I have learned more economics from him in the course of these afternoon walks than from many of the books I have read. Another economist from whom I also learned a great deal in the afternoons we spent together was F. Y. Edgeworth, and his death in the spring of this year at the age of eighty-one was a great grief to me. He had given

up his professorship in 1921, but stayed on at All Souls. I saw much of him in the last few years of his life. He had been a good friend to me ever since I came back to Oxford, encouraging me in my work at Ruskin and taking the greatest interest in the college and the students. He was a delightful companion, full of out-of-the-way bits of learning, not merely an economist, but widely read in the classics and in many branches of modern literature, with an astonishingly good verbal memory and a whimsical humour. Half Irishman and half Spaniard, he had a quaint, old-fashioned courtesy which was very charming and sometimes rather unexpected. I remember when crossing some fields with him one day we came to a very awkward stile. A man and his wife had just got over and were coming towards us, when Edgeworth discovered that a little boy was about to follow them, but was standing back to allow us to get over first. The astonished child was addressed as follows : ' We, I fear, shall take longer in surmounting this obstacle than you will, so pray get over, sir, and join your party ! ' Edgeworth was extraordinarily active both in body and mind up to the very end. Even in the last year of his life he thought nothing of bicycling up Headington Hill with his golf clubs slung on to his machine, and playing a round of golf, nor was he daunted by Boar's Hill, a still steeper and longer ascent on the other side of Oxford. He once told me that Boar's Hill reminded him of Mill's chapter on International Value : ' When you thought you had mastered it, you suddenly came upon the stiffest bit at the end.' Nothing apparently could tire him ; on one very hot and sultry day I remember his walking from All Souls to our house in Bardwell Road and then going for a long tramp with me. When we got back I suggested that he might like to come in and have a rest. ' Rest ? ' said he. ' Why should I rest ? I rest in bed,' and hurried off back to All Souls. He always got up very early in the morning, and did most of his more abstract work before breakfast, except in the Summer Term, when he had a daily early morning bathe in Parsons' Pleasure, a well-known university bathing-place. I missed him, and indeed do still miss him, very much.

In May 1926 came the General Strike, and, like the rest of

the country, Oxford was thrown into a state of turmoil for nine days. I regarded the strike as a misfortune, and, like many others, thought that with a little more tact on the part of the Government and a little more give-and-take by both employers and employed, it might have been averted. However, there it was, and my wife and I, who had been for so many years closely associated with all sides of the Labour Movement, naturally threw ourselves into the struggle on the side of the workers. The strike we regarded as an act of real heroism on the part of numbers of men and women, who had come out merely to help their fellow-workers whom they regarded as suffering from gross injustice. We knew something of the tremendous risks involved and the real sacrifice it meant to them. Even the Oxford working people displayed a remarkable solidarity. A Strike Committee was formed, of which my wife was a member, and a vigorous propaganda was carried on in Oxford and the surrounding villages, in which she took a very active part. A course of daily lectures was organized at Ruskin College for the Oxford trade unionists on the Royal Commission on the Coal Industry. These were given by various university teachers and some of the Ruskin staff, and I gave one of them. Apart from this I did a good deal of work in preparing notes for speakers. When the strike was over Oxford soon settled down to its normal calm, but for some time to come we heard many a sad story of men who were suffering for the unselfish part they had played in this disastrous struggle.

Part of my work this year was connected with a proposal to remove Ruskin College from Oxford. Lady Warwick had very generously offered her house, Easton Lodge, to the Trade Union Congress to be used as a college for working-class students, and the General Council had the somewhat optimistic idea that Ruskin College and the Labour College could work together under one roof. This, from my long experience, I knew to be entirely impracticable. To begin with, I considered Easton Lodge as unsuitable for a college, situated as it is in a remote part of the country miles from any town. I knew that it was impossible to persuade the Labour College people to adopt the Ruskin ideas of education, and I did not want

Ruskin to run the risk of being absorbed in a purely propagandist movement. Apart from this, it had always seemed to me that it had been a distinct advantage to Ruskin College to be placed in Oxford, and I did not want it to be cut loose from its traditions and the definite status it had secured in the educational world. There are of course good arguments against Oxford as the home of Ruskin College, but on the whole the advantages more than outweigh the drawbacks. I therefore set to work to do all in my power to prevent the scheme going through, at any rate as far as the College was concerned. I got out a letter addressed to the Governing Council asking that Ruskin should be allowed to remain in Oxford, and setting forth the reasons. This letter was signed by more than one hundred old students, as well as by a very large number of representative men and women interested in education from all parts of the country. I presented the letter and addressed the Council on the subject, but all was of no avail. The financial position of the college was very weak, and it was decided that Ruskin should go into the scheme. I was a good deal criticized for my action, but am still convinced that I was fully justified, and was glad when the Trade Union Congress at its meeting in 1926 turned the whole scheme down.

While we were at Ruskin, and during our holidays at Ascott, we nearly always had one or more friends with us for the week-end, and we have kept up this practice ever since we came to North End. We have in the course of the last few years seen much of the Slessers, and Harry and I have had many amusing arguments—he deploring what he calls my ignorance of theology, and I maintaining that he is no economist. Bourne End is within easy reach of Oxford, and we have spent many delightful week-ends with them at their house on the river there. I remember on one wet Sunday at Bourne End, Stanley Spencer, the artist, who was also a guest in the house, amused himself by making drawings of my wife and me. He was satisfied with my portrait, saying that it was very good and ‘rugged’; but my wife, who was much pleased with the drawing of herself, was disappointed when Stanley tore it in half, saying that it was a horrible thing—‘much too pretty!’

Other occasional week-end visitors are the Hugh Daltons.¹ We first came to know them in London during the War years. Mrs. Dalton had helped in the W.E.A. central office in the last year of the War, and Dalton had later on become a consultative member of the Council of Ruskin College. He and I talk much of economics when he stays with us, and these talks help to keep me in touch with the thought of the younger economists of the day. On one occasion our week-ends were almost the cause of trouble in the Foreign Office! Arthur Henderson, after he had become Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, wrote to ask if he and Mrs. Henderson could come for a Sunday, and we were obliged to tell him that this was impossible, as our spare room was occupied by the Under Secretary!

We have also had delightful visits from the Mansbridges, the Henry Clays, the Laurence Binyons, and many others, including friends we have met in the course of our travels. Then there are the young people—Vera's friends, and undergraduates and undergraduettes, with whom our house is constantly filled. I am on occasion driven to take refuge in my study to escape from dances which extend themselves over other parts of the house! The giving up of my work at Ruskin College has neither cut me adrift from my old friends nor from the society of the younger generation.

¹ Dr. Hugh Dalton, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the Labour Government of 1929.

XVIII

SOUTH AFRICA

IN the summer of 1926 the Edwin Cannans paid us a visit at Filey. Cannan, who had just retired from his professorship at the London School of Economics after thirty years' work there, had been asked to undertake a lecturing tour in South Africa, and he and Mrs. Cannan were starting off in the following January. They were full of their plans, and urged us to go out with them. We, after our glimpses of Durban and Cape Town on our way back from Australia, were very much attracted by the idea, though we hesitated on grounds of expense. Henry Clay, however, who had just returned from South Africa full of enthusiasm for the country and who came to stay with us directly we got back to Oxford, said we must go even if it ruined us ! So we took the plunge and reserved our berths. My mother-in-law, Mrs. Nicholl, had been gradually failing in health for some years past, and early in January, a fortnight before our boat was to sail, she died quite suddenly. My wife was then able to contemplate leaving England with a much more peaceful mind than she had had for some time, as the last two or three years of her mother's life had been full of suffering.

About ten days before we were to sail I developed an attack of influenza, which turned to bronchitis, and it seemed very doubtful whether I should be able to get on board. This attack came at a particularly awkward moment, as we were engaged to attend an important gathering in the Potteries. The W.E.A. in North Staffordshire had suffered two great losses in the course of the last few years in the death of A. L. Smith, Master of Balliol, and of Harry Jenkins, one of the original students of the Longton Tutorial Class—the first Tutorial Class to be established in the country. A. L. Smith had for many years been Chairman of the Oxford Joint Committee—the Committee responsible for all the Tutorial Classes in the Potteries—and had

taken a very keen personal interest in the educational work carried on in the district. He had paid many visits to the classes, and was a well-known and much-loved figure to large bodies of students. One of the characteristics of the North Staffordshire people, as I myself know from personal experience, is their intense loyalty and affection for any one whom they have come to regard as a friend, and soon after A. L. Smith's death the Pottery classes began to plan a memorial to him. We had some little time before this taken part in a ceremony on the occasion of the opening of a W.E.A. library at Stoke-on-Trent, and it was decided that the memorial should take the form of a portrait of the Master to be hung in the library. As a companion to this there was to be a portrait of Harry Jenkins. Jenkins was in many ways a remarkable man. A basket-maker by trade, he had a real passion for education, and by dint of unremitting study in his spare time had become a most successful lecturer. It was in fact largely owing to his energy that so much good work was accomplished in the mining villages around the Five Towns. He had a most lovable personality, and in spite of his great achievement, against terrific odds, retained to the end a humility and simple-mindedness which endeared him to every one. To these two men, therefore, the North Staffordshire classes had resolved to do honour. A great meeting was arranged in the Town Hall at Hanley, and all the leading W.E.A.-ers were invited. I was to open the proceedings with an address on the W.E.A., and my wife was to unveil the portraits. That I should go, however, was of course out of the question, so I had to do as well as I could in spite of all the discomfort of influenza, and to dictate to my secretary as good an address as I could manage. It was with feelings of real disappointment that I saw my wife go off to the Potteries to read to the meeting the address which I had so much looked forward to giving in person.

It was only on the day before we were to sail that I was allowed up for the first time, but Gillett, sensible doctor as he is, was determined I should go, and we set off with the Cannans to Southampton, with the result that I had a bad return of bronchitis in the evening. However, Gillett was justified, for after a couple of days at sea I had entirely recovered. We had a

delightful seventeen days on the sea in good weather, with the usual three hours' stop at Madeira and breakfast at Read's Hotel. Cannan, who had not quite finished his lectures, spent a good deal of time typing them out on a portable typewriter he had been given by his students on his retirement. We read a good many books, including Basil William's *Life of Cecil Rhodes*. I had before going away from England done a considerable amount of reading on South Africa, and I think the book which gave me the best idea of its recent history was the *Life of Lord de Villiers*, by Eric Walker.

We arrived at Cape Town on the last day of January 1927. The Cannans were met by J. D. Rheinallt Jones,¹ who was to conduct them on their tour and to whom we had letters of introduction. He was at that time acting as secretary to the first European-Bantu Conference, arranged by the Dutch Reformed Church, co-operating with other religious bodies for the consideration of the Native Question. The Conference opened at Cape Town on the very day we arrived. We all proceeded to the Mount Nelson Hotel, where Rheinallt Jones was staying, together with Howard Pim, a well-known authority on South African affairs, and several other people who were taking part in the Conference. This was a very fortunate introduction to South Africa for us, as, but for the meeting with Rheinallt Jones and Howard Pim, we should, apart from some introductions to politicians and others, have spent our time in South Africa merely as ordinary tourists. As it was, however, we were plunged at once into a question of absorbing interest, and had the opportunity of obtaining some inside knowledge of one of the most vital problems with which the country is faced—the relation of the white and black races to one another.

After a few days at Cape Town our party scattered for a time. Mr. Pim went back to Johannesburg, very kindly promising to look after us when we got there. Rheinallt Jones and the Cannans set out west on the lecturing tour, and we ourselves settled down at St. James, a beautiful little place on the Indian

¹ Registrar of the Witwatersrand University, and later Adviser to the South African Institute of Race Relations.

Ocean about sixteen miles by rail from Cape Town. Before we parted from the Cannans, Rheinallt Jones took us all for two delightful expeditions—one to the Cape of Good Hope, which I am afraid I had never before realized was nearly forty miles from Cape Town, and another up the Hottentot Hollander range of the Drakensberg Mountains, lunching at Stellenbosch on the way and going up through Sir Lowry's Pass. We also all spent a very pleasant afternoon at Claremont with Archbishop and Mrs. Carter, to whom we had an introduction from Lord Buxton, and whom we had already met at a luncheon given by Mr. Pim. We much enjoyed their garden, one of the most famous of the many beautiful gardens round Cape Town.

We settled down at St. James for some time, but constantly went into Cape Town to visit the people to whom we had been given introductions. Arthur Henderson and Lord Buxton had both written about us to Colonel Creswell, the leader of the Labour Party and a member of the Nationalist-Labour Coalition Government, and we saw a good deal of him and his wife. Colonel Creswell took us to some debates in the House of Assembly and introduced us to some of his colleagues. We went with Mrs. Creswell to a morning party given by Mrs. Hertzog at Groote Schuur—Cecil Rhodes' house, now the official residence of the Prime Minister. Mrs. Creswell took my wife all round the house, which is still left exactly as it was in Rhodes' time, containing his wonderful collections of books and old Dutch furniture, while I sat on the stoep and talked to Mrs. Hertzog and Mrs. Tielman Roos. Mrs. Hertzog, who had a son at New College, asked me what my position was at Oxford, and when I told her that I had been Principal of Ruskin College, she said: 'How interesting. I suppose it is a college for the blind'! She was very much interested in my lack of sight, and discussed it with me in a simple and very kindly way. After this party we felt that we must climb up the mountain to see the celebrated Rhodes monument. We had been told we could get lunch at a café near by, but when we got there, rather late for lunch, we found to our horror that everything was shut up, it being the 'day off' for the manager! There was nothing to be done but to walk some miles back to Rondebosch, where we

managed to secure an inadequate and belated lunch at three-thirty.

The more I saw of South Africa the more I became attracted by the beautiful country and delightful climate and by its friendly people. We had not been there long before we actually began to toy with the idea of trying to get some work and settling down near Cape Town. The notion of making a complete break with the past and starting life over again, as it were, has often rather appealed to me, and South Africa seemed to be just the place for a new adventure. I soon became absorbed in the problems which seemed to lie ahead of the South African people, and still find myself deeply interested in South African affairs.

All the time I was there I had the feeling that a shadow was hanging over the land—a shadow which had in it a hint of tragedy for the future unless it could be cleared away. Everywhere we went we met with racial questions of one kind or another. The relations of the English and Dutch were by no means good. The Dutch were in power, and the controversy over the Flag was raging. We heard some very unpleasant things said by the Dutch about the English and some almost equally disagreeable remarks made by English men and women about the Dutch. I very much disliked the contemptuous attitude adopted towards the 'coloured' people at the Cape by English and Dutch alike, and the contempt of the 'coloured' people for the natives was no less disheartening. We came across a great deal of strong feeling on the Indian Question, though while we were there what was hoped to be a permanent settlement with regard to the position of the Indians in Natal was reached, and we heard an interesting debate in the House of Assembly, when Mr. Malan, Minister for the Interior, introduced the Indian Bill, to which even Ghandi had given his blessing. Again, there was the problem of the 'Poor Whites'; but greatest and most far-reaching of all there was the Native Question. The Poor Whites, as is well known, consist mainly of that portion of the Dutch population which has, owing to the working of the Dutch law of inheritance, been gradually ousted from the land. To such a state of degradation have they come that they are unable to perform any kind of

skilled work, while they are too 'proud' to undertake unskilled or, as they call it, 'Kaffir' work. They drift into the towns and villages, where they live in the most squalid surroundings, and their numbers are rapidly increasing. Various experiments have been set on foot with the object of making them once more a self-respecting people, or at any rate with the hope of training their children to be useful citizens. When we were at Pretoria we spent a long day inspecting one of these experiments. We were driven miles over the Bush Veld across the Limpopo—quite dry where we passed—arriving finally at a large tobacco farm which was being worked entirely by Poor Whites. This farm represented the final stage of a threefold scheme which was being carried on in the district. The first stage consisted in putting these poor people into a settlement and employing them on road-making at a weekly wage. The best of them were then picked out and put into another settlement, where they were given small holdings to work at by themselves under supervision. Again, the more promising were moved on to the third stage, where they had much larger holdings which had been prepared for cultivation. They were subsidized by the Government, the subsidy being gradually paid back, and the hope was that some of them at any rate would be capable of becoming independent cultivators. Meanwhile the children were being educated, and welfare supervisors and nurses were provided in order to teach the Poor Whites the elements of decent living. The experiment had only been working some eighteen months, so there were no tangible results to show us, but it seemed to be running on sound lines, and the people appeared to be happy and contented, with the children growing up in a healthy, normal way.

I had several interesting talks with Creswell about the Native Question, though it did not seem to be a subject he much cared to discuss. He maintained that our Labour Party really did not understand the problem, and he strongly defended the Colour Bar Act, which, though purporting to deal only with machine-workers in the mines, was capable of being so used as to exclude the natives from all industries in which machinery was employed. Creswell's views on the Native Question seemed to represent those of the entire South African Labour

Party, who were obsessed with the fear of the industrial competition of the native. Skilled work for the white man at a pound a day and unskilled work for the native at a pound a week seemed to them to be just and reasonable. These views were terrible to me ; and though I fully realized that there was a real and very difficult economic problem, I felt that it could not be shirked, and that unless it were frankly faced and unless some solution, just to the native as well as to the European, could be found, the future for South Africa was indeed alarming. Many of the people to whom I talked seemed to me extraordinarily happy-go-lucky about the future. 'Things will work out all right,' I was often told when I raised awkward points. When I suggested that the time might come when the natives would no longer tolerate being treated practically as slaves, I sometimes heard this reply, even from Labour men, 'Well, after all we have force on our side.' I discussed the Native Question, however, with many people other than members of the Labour Party, and soon found that there was a considerable body of opinion in favour of handling the problem on broad and humane lines. My wife and I lunched with Sir James ¹ and Lady Rose-Innes, and Sir James talked to us much of the history of the country—of Rhodes and Jameson and others, and of the present situation. He took a very serious but very generous view of the Native Question, saying the natives were becoming restless and bitter, and that we could not for ever keep them down.

At Pretoria and Johannesburg we came into much closer contact with the Native Question through many people who were doing good work in establishing better relations between the black and white races, and we also had the opportunity of seeing something of the natives themselves. While we were in Johannesburg, Rheinallt Jones arrived on his tour with the Cannans. He introduced us to most of the European members of the Johannesburg Joint Council of Europeans and Natives, a body which exists to work out schemes of educational and social work among the natives, with co-operation on equal terms between the two races. These councils are established in other parts of South Africa, and it seemed to me that

¹ Late Chief Justice of South Africa.

if they could only obtain the whole-hearted support of the Europeans in the country they held much promise of hope for the future.

We of course saw a good deal more of Howard Pim, who, from what we heard, had been the leading spirit in the formation of the Joint Council, but who was at the moment much occupied with the Flag Question. He was most kind to us ; he had told his friends in Johannesburg about us, so that we found ourselves receiving the warmest welcome from many people of whom we had never heard. We dined with him at the beautiful Country Club, and much of what I learned of the Native Question I gathered from most interesting talks with him. He introduced us to Dr. Karney, the Bishop of Johannesburg, an active colleague of his and of Rheinallt Jones in the native work. The Bishop and Mrs. Karney entertained us at their house, and in him I found a most delightful companion. We had tea one day with Canon Parker, vicar of a parish in the slums of Johannesburg and head of a Native Mission, and we met there Mrs. Sarah Gertrude Millin, the well-known novelist, whose books we knew. I had a most interesting talk with her about Native Questions, but particularly about the coloured people of the Cape Province, of whom she has made so close a study. We passed on to modern English novels, and I must confess to being rather surprised to find that she regarded D. H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* as the greatest novel of the twentieth century. I had not read it, but in the light of what she said I subsequently wasted a good deal of time in trying to discover its merits ! We also saw a good deal of Professor Macmillan, the well-known writer on the history of Native policy, and of Mr. Lucas, a former Labour leader, and his wife. They were all members of the Joint Council, and they, with many others, went out of their way to make our stay in Johannesburg interesting and pleasant.

The Joint Council had interested itself in a social centre for the natives, which had recently been established in Johannesburg through the efforts of two American missionaries, and which was known as the Bantu Men's Social Centre. The club was run much like an English working-men's club, and was also a centre for educational work. Evening classes were held there

very much on the lines of the W.E.A., many of the tutors being members of the university staff and their wives. There had been—as may be imagined—great opposition to the founding of the club, and a good deal of difficulty had been experienced in finding suitable accommodation. Even when premises were at last obtained, a condition was made that the front door should be placed in a side passage. The natives must not be seen entering a club. Mr. Adams, who was then in charge, asked us to come and see the place and have a talk with some of the members. They were drawn almost entirely from the more educated natives. Amongst them were native teachers in missionary schools, lawyers, and one or two musicians, while others were engaged in unskilled work of one sort or another. We saw them quite informally in a small room, and found ourselves extraordinarily at home with them. I soon began to feel as if I were back in Oxford in the midst of a group of Ruskin students. There was a note of bewilderment in the account they gave us of the way in which they were treated. ‘We loved Queen Victoria,’ one of them said to me; ‘she did not want us to be slaves. Now the Government wants again to make us slaves.’ They hoped the Labour Party in England was not like the Labour Party in South Africa, and implored me to ask ‘your great Labour Party to help us’. In talking of their grievances one of them made a remark which seemed to me almost alarming: ‘The white people treat us in this way because they fear us,’ he said; and there is, I am afraid, much truth in this, for fear more than ill-will is, amongst the Europeans, without doubt at the back of much of their antagonism. If this idea becomes widespread among the native races, and if at the same time nothing is done to remove their grievances, there may be very serious trouble. As far as I could judge from this particular group, the Bantus are a kindly, gentle people, without malice and with very little bitterness—only anxious to take their proper place in the life of the country. As one of them said: ‘We want to work together with the white people to make a good South Africa.’

It may be said that I, having seen and talked to only a small group of educated natives, am hardly in a position to form an

opinion on these difficult racial questions, but my impressions were confirmed by what I was told by those who had an intimate knowledge of the Bantu people. The education of the natives has been conducted by the missionaries, supported by Government grants, but even now hardly one-quarter of the native population of school age is found in the schools, and of this fraction by far the greater portion is, owing to the backward economic condition of the people, to be found in the lowest standards. Those who were capable of benefiting by a university education were in consequence very few, and for them South Africa provides only one Native College—Fort Hare, in the Cape Province—all the universities being closed to them. I was often told that the Bantus were a backward race, that it would take several generations to make them capable of profiting by education. But the natives I saw who had been educated seemed to me a standing proof of the fallaciousness of this argument. There were distinct signs that a demand for education was growing up amongst them, and seeing that numbers of them are brought into close contact with European civilization, it would be surprising if this were not the case. To refuse educational opportunities to the native is not only unjust but shortsighted. Such a policy is certain to have the effect of leaving him a prey to unscrupulous agitators who aim at arousing his passions rather than helping him to work out really constructive ideas based on reason and justice.

A few days after our first visit we were invited to be present at a lecture at the Bantu Social Centre. On this occasion it was crowded with natives who, under the guidance of a native chairman, carried on a very good discussion. As an example of their courteous manners and kindly feeling, I may perhaps be allowed to mention the following incident, though it was unduly flattering to myself. The meeting was rather unfortunate in its European lecturer, who somewhat tactlessly said when introducing me that I should find it easier to talk to them, freely, as owing to my blindness I could not see their colour ! It may be imagined how embarrassing it was for me to hear my audience insulted in this way, but the native chairman, in thanking me for my contribution to the discussion, put us at

our ease again by saying with a touch of real poetic feeling : ' I thank God, Who, when He deprived him of physical sight, gave him the wider vision.'

At Pretoria we made great friends with Mr. Lang, a master at the High School, who was much interested in the work of the Joint Councils, and who had himself come into close contact with native teachers, many of whom he said had a culture which was quite up to European standards. He and his wife entertained us at their home, and one afternoon he took us to see the native location outside Pretoria. Here we visited an elementary school, where some four hundred and fifty children were taught by nuns, and though it was after school-hours we were surprised to find the schoolroom full of native women sitting at the little desks. The nuns told us that these were the mothers of the children, who had asked if they might come to school in the afternoons to learn to read and write. Here we did something which is rare for white people visiting South Africa, for the priest who gave us tea also invited the location storekeeper, of course a native, with whom we actually sat down to tea—a proceeding which would have made most South Africans shudder to think of ! Mr. Thompson, the storekeeper, was most friendly, taking us to his own home, talking to us of his daughter, a student at Lovedale, the native training institution, and introducing my wife to some of the location women. She was much interested in finding in the first cottage to which she was taken a large coloured photograph of the King and Queen in court dress, and on the dresser the orthodox cruet, obviously hailing from Birmingham ! But she came out much moved, and told me that when she offered her hand, the woman of the house took it in both her own and thanked her with tears.

It is usually thought that the one idea of the native is to ape the white man in every respect. It is true that the Bantus who leave the land and settle down in the cities do like to adopt European ways of living. Nevertheless they are proud of their race and not, as is often supposed, at all ashamed of their colour. Lang, who was very anxious that the boys at his school should grow up with decent ideas about the natives, told us that he had made the experiment of inviting a native teacher

to give them a talk. Some of the boys were horrified, and inclined to be slightly contemptuous, but they gave the speaker a good reception, and were very much impressed by him, especially when in the course of his address he said : ‘ You are proud of being white, and you are right. But we are proud of being black. If I woke up to-morrow morning and looked in the glass and found I was white, I should go and cut my throat ! ’

The position of the natives in Johannesburg under the law struck me as outrageous. We had been given letters of introduction to Mr. Norman, who was in charge of the very important Probation work which is being carried on in Johannesburg. My wife, as a magistrate, was of course much interested in Probation, and was anxious to obtain all possible information on the subject. Mr. Norman was most kind in showing her round ; he introduced her to his workers, and she spent a good deal of time with Mrs. Maxeke, the native woman Probation Officer. This lady was a graduate of an American Negro University and the wife of a native Methodist minister near Johannesburg, and she and my wife made great friends. They naturally wanted to have quiet talks about the work away from the rather crowded offices. But my wife, to her great disgust, found that it was impossible to talk with Mrs. Maxeke even on the stoep of our hotel, much less to bring her inside to tea, as she had intended. She might not enter any restaurant, so that their talks had to be carried on in one of the cars belonging to the Probation courts, as they drove round inspecting various aspects of the work.

No natives were allowed to go in the trams, which meant that many of them had to walk miles every day to and from their work. Libraries were closed to them, and they were excluded from the theatres and places of entertainment. They were under very strict police supervision, no doubt a necessary precaution as long as the relation between the two races remains what it is. All the time I was there I could not get away from the feeling that the native was looked upon as a sort of ticket-of-leave man.

While we were at St. James I made friends with a lady, who was staying in our hotel, over Samuel Butler’s *Erewhon*,

which I was reading in Braille, and which she was also reading. Mrs. Kantack, who came from Johannesburg, where her husband was working as a civil engineer, had with her a most charming little daughter of seventeen. We were delighted to find that they were returning to Johannesburg on the same day that we ourselves were leaving Cape Town for Pretoria. The long journey was made very pleasant to us by travelling with them. We sat together most of the time, and they told us much about the country through which we passed. When we arrived at Johannesburg, after a week at Pretoria, they came at once to see us, and we spent a great deal of time with them during our stay. Irene Kantack (or 'Weenie', as she was called), had at that time just left Roedean, the large girls' school, founded on the lines of Roedean near Brighton, and was just going to the Witwatersrand University. She was extremely proud of her school, took us to tea with Miss Earl, the head mistress, and persuaded her to invite us both to speak to the whole school on the Labour Movement. I was to take the educational side and my wife the political. We had a most amusing evening with the children, and I was delighted with the keen, alert manner in which they threw themselves into the discussion which followed—some of them attacking us fiercely on many points, but all in perfectly good part, and with an intelligence and courtesy which did great credit to the school.

All Johannesburg was very much excited by the arrival at this time of Arthur Bouchier and his company, who were touring South Africa with 'Treasure Island'. To all the children he was a sort of hero, and we, having a link with him through the Labour Party—he was the Labour candidate for Gloucester—asked him to lunch, and invited the Kantacks and Weenie to meet him. This was to Weenie a thrilling experience, and she told us how excited the rest of the school would be to hear that she had actually met the great man. Bouchier arrived a few minutes before the Kantacks, and we told him of the great event this luncheon was to one of our guests. He was much amused, and played up in a delightful manner, devoting a good deal of his very amusing conversation entirely to Weenie. He delighted her by letting her into all sorts of stage secrets.

I remember him telling us something about his part as ' John Silver '. He said the strapping up of one of his legs and hopping about entirely on the other with the aid of a crutch was not in the least tiring—' it was merely a trick '. What he did, however, find tiring, was shouting in Silver's raucous voice, and indeed his own voice had suffered to the extent that he was exceedingly hoarse when we saw him. This was the last time we were to see him, for he died soon after of pneumonia in Johannesburg. But the little episode with Weenie left us with a very happy memory of him.

With Mr. and Mrs. Kantack we made a real and permanent friendship, and I have rarely met a more attractive girl than their little daughter. She was not only always bubbling over with keenness and merriment, with a bright and quick mind, but she had that rare gift of personality which, even at her age, made her a centre of interest in almost any group of people, and she had one of the sweetest dispositions I have ever known. Her sudden and tragic death six months later was a great grief to us, and I feel sure I am not exaggerating when I say it meant a real loss to a world in which she must have made her mark.

While we were in Cape Town we had seen a good deal of C. W. Cousins of the Ministry of Labour, and when we got to Pretoria Mrs. Cousins, who was a daughter of Sir James Murray of the Oxford English Dictionary, was exceedingly kind to us. We met at her house J. H. Hofmeyr and his mother. Hofmeyr, after a brilliant career at Oxford, had, at the age of twenty-four, become Principal of the Witwatersrand University, and was now, at thirty, its Vice-Chancellor, as well as Administrator of the Transvaal. Mrs. Hofmeyr invited us to tea with them in Pretoria, and we were to meet them again at a large function in Johannesburg. This was Foundation Day of the Witwatersrand University—a celebration which corresponds to an Oxford Commemoration—and Sir Carruthers Beattie, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town, was to receive an honorary degree. We went with Mrs. Kantack, and drove to the Town Hall through most amusing scenes. The students had organized a rag which was typical of South African life. A ' gold rush ' had been arranged in the principal street, where

little claims had been pegged out. Students in fancy costumes were making 'rushes' for these claims from all directions, and motors had some difficulty in wending their way. The Town Hall was packed with people, and before the speeches there was a good deal of music, including the constant singing of the university 'Alma Mater', a song set to the most beautiful tune, which we thought must be some old German air. I afterwards met at dinner Mrs. Kirby, the wife of the Professor of Music, and told her how much I had been impressed with this lovely tune and asked for its history. This was a most happy mistake on my part, for she told me that the air had been written by her husband. We listened to a very fine speech by Hofmeyr in the best Oxford manner, and Sir Carruthers Beattie gave what I can best describe as a real W.E.A. speech, urging those who had graduated to work for a time when university education would be brought within the reach of all who could benefit by it.

The W.E.A. had found its way into South Africa, I think under the inspiration of Mansbridge, though he had never visited the country. But it had not taken very firm root, either in the Cape Province or in the Transvaal. The trade unionists and the English workers generally seemed mainly occupied in promoting their material welfare, and did not appear to feel the need of education. The language difficulty was an obstacle in the way of bringing adult education to the Dutch, and the W.E.A. as we knew it in England was quite unsuited to the needs of the natives and coloured people, who for the most part could not even read or write. There were, nevertheless, fairly flourishing branches at Durban and Johannesburg. The Johannesburg Branch largely owed its existence to Rheinallt Jones, always a leading figure in any good social work, and he was backed up and helped by some of the university tutors. The branch arranged a social in our honour, and I gave them practically the same address which I had meant to give at the Stoke celebration, but which my wife had had to read for me, dealing mainly with the history and objects of the W.E.A. The address seems to have aroused some interest, as, soon after we got back to England, I received a cable from the W.E.A. Council inviting me to come out as W.E.A. organizer for the

Transvaal. Rheinallt Jones was behind this invitation, and I think the idea was that I should combine W.E.A. work with work for the Joint Council of Europeans and Natives. The offer was most tempting, and I should have closed with it had it meant living in or near Cape Town. But though I had by this time quite recovered from my illness, it was thought to be rather risky for me to establish myself permanently at an altitude of 6,000 feet above the sea.

Just before we left Cape Town another suggestion was made to us. There were vacancies on the staffs of Lovedale and Fort Hare, and we were pressed to delay our departure, to visit the colleges, and to consider the possibilities of these posts. Had we not been sailing the next day we should certainly have gone as far as to pay a visit to Lovedale and Fort Hare, though I was not particularly anxious to return to teaching, feeling that administrative or political work appealed to me more. We had a few days in Cape Town before sailing, and by this time the university was in session. We were most kindly entertained by the Eric Walkers ¹ and the Plants,² and at a very pleasant farewell dinner-party given to us by Edmund Farrer ³ (an old friend of my wife's) and Mrs. Farrer we met, amongst others, Sir Carruthers and Lady Beattie. We left Cape Town on April 1st 1927 in the *Carnarvon Castle*.

We look back upon our time in South Africa as one of the most delightful and successful of all our holidays abroad. The country, in spite of all its problems—perhaps because of its problems—appealed to me in a way in which no other country outside England has ever done. The people we met were so interesting and so friendly that I felt myself curiously at home among them, and, could I have found really suitable work, we would gladly have cast in our lot with our South African friends, and have settled down permanently in the country. In any case we fully intend returning there for another and longer visit.

¹ Eric Walker, Professor of History in the University of Cape Town.

² A. Plant, Professor of Economics in the University of Cape Town.

³ Secretary to the Department of Finance in the Union of South Africa.

XIX

AMERICA AND AN EXPERIMENT

WHILE we were in Johannesburg my wife was told of a lady living there who was doing some very wonderful work in the treatment of eye-disease. She had completely cured a young man who was rapidly going blind, and whose case the ordinary oculists had given up as hopeless. My wife also heard of several other instances where the treatment had produced the most astonishing results. She did not think very much of this at the time, and did not tell me, not wishing to worry me about my eyes, and knowing that I had more or less resigned myself to the idea that I was incurable. She had also, like myself, become somewhat sceptical with regard to unorthodox methods of treatment. However, curiously enough, we found that the Johannesburg lady was one of our fellow-passengers on board the *Carnarvon Castle*. We soon came to know her, and found that she was on her way out to New York via England to take a course of study under the American doctor who had invented the treatment she was using. This she had hitherto only studied in books, and the American doctor, having heard of her successes, had invited her over to New York, offering to let her see something of his work at close quarters. This lady talked to me about my eyes, and said she was convinced that I could be cured. She told me a good deal about the treatment, and begged me to try it.

I had not thought much about my eyes for some years past, although I had been getting gradually blinder all the time. It may be thought from what I have said hitherto that I could not have become much blinder, but although the gradual change did not make a great deal of difference to me, I was certainly blinder in 1927 than in 1920, when I had last seen an oculist. I could, however, even now distinguish between light and darkness, though I could not always tell without

an effort whether the lights in a room were or were not turned on.

When I got home, partly for fun and in a very sceptical mood, I began to try some of the methods of treatment of which my friend had told me. These were quite easy for me to carry out by myself, and to my amazement, after a fortnight I noticed a very slight improvement. For instance, I could see my hand before my face—a thing I had not been able to do for several years. I persevered with the treatment all through the summer, and, although no further progress was noticeable, I became extremely optimistic about the possibilities of improving my sight to a point which would mean a real gain. From inquiries I made about other people who had undergone the treatment and from what I heard as to the wonderful successes of the American doctor, I became convinced that there might be a chance for me. There were people in England who had worked under the American doctor and who were practising the treatment with success, but why, I thought, should I not go to the fountain-head direct, and see what could be done for me there? I had often talked of going to America again, and was anxious to see something of my mother's relations out there, and especially of my cousin Will Johnson, and this gave me an additional reason for thinking of trying the treatment in New York rather than in London. I wrote to the American doctor, explaining my case as well as I could. He took a hopeful view, and advised me to come and see him. His advice was strongly backed by my Johannesburg friend, who had by this time returned to South Africa, and who wrote to me in the strongest terms of the skill of the New York doctor.

Towards the end of September, while we were at Filey, we decided rather impulsively to take the plunge. We let our house in Oxford for a year, and set off, with Vera, for New York at the end of October. I went to see the doctor the day after I arrived, and he took a very hopeful view of my case, advising me to come regularly to him. After I had been to him every day for a few weeks he said he was convinced he could cure me, going so far as to say that he intended to make me able to read the numbers in the New York Telephone Directory before he

had done with me ! But he told me my cure might take a very long time ; on the other hand, he said, it might come quite suddenly. I went to him day after day for months, spending some three hours every morning in his 'office', the strange term American doctors use for their consulting-rooms.

At first I certainly did gain a certain amount of improvement, and even had one or two distinct, though only momentary, flashes of clear vision, in which I could see, for instance, small letters on a test-card quite clearly. But somehow or other I could not retain what I gained. There were constant ups and downs, and at times I seemed to be no better than I was when I first began, though, on the other hand, there were short periods of decided improvement. But after three or four months everything seemed to come to a standstill. The flashes of improvement ceased, and I settled down into a sort of stationary condition, retaining nothing more than the very slight improvement I had gained in my first fortnight's experiment at home ; but in spite of this I struggled on for some time longer. Then the doctor became seriously ill, and was unable to give me the personal attention I required. However, apart from this handicap, I began to realize that the thing was hopeless, and early in July decided to abandon the treatment and come home. I think now that the disease in my eyes—and almost everything was apparently wrong with them—was too far advanced to make possible any cure.

I wish to make it quite clear that this doctor was in no sense of the word a quack. He never advertised himself, and in fact it was only by the merest accident that I heard of him. He was a qualified doctor, an M.D. of Columbia University ; he had published very full accounts of his methods, any one was at liberty to go into his office and inspect his treatment, and he certainly had done some very wonderful cures. While I was in New York I met several people who had been practically blind and whom he had cured. Had I gone to him when I was thirty instead of when I was nearly sixty I might have had a very different tale to tell.

The actual treatment itself did not involve any strain at all. In fact, its whole point was relaxation and the avoidance of strain. Nevertheless, the strain really was enormous, owing to

the anxiety and worry caused by the ups and downs I experienced, and the alternative waves of optimism and pessimism through which I passed. My wife, I think, felt the strain even more than I did, and when we got back home she was quite ill for some time.

New York is a very different place from what it must have been when my grandfather's friends complained of his going to live so far 'up town' on his removal to 18th Street, some time in the early 'forties. It was indeed a different place from the New York I had known in 1900, when I was there before. The city struck me as a great deal noisier and dirtier. Of course it had considerably extended its area, and the sky-scrapers, beautiful as I am told they are, had turned many of the streets into narrow, sunless cañons. New bridges had been thrown across the East River, and Long Island was much more closely linked up with the city than formerly, while, to the west, enormous suburbs had grown up on the New Jersey side of the Hudson River. The noise by day was of course terrific, and it seemed to me that in New York you never get the lull at night which is noticeable in most cities. There was rarely a night without fires in some parts of the city, and all night the fire-engines seemed to rush through the town at a reckless speed, blowing sirens and followed by equipment lorries provided with horns, and these again followed by ambulances ringing enormous bells, with the object, I imagine, of picking up the slain and injured victims of the fire-engines !

My treatment involved not merely a great expenditure of time but a great expenditure of money. I had hoped to follow up my interest in the native problem of South Africa by seeing something of the Negro Question in the Southern States of America. But although, after I had given up the treatment, we might have spared the time to carry out this plan, what with the doctor's fees and the cost of living in New York, we simply could not afford it. The result was that we saw very little of America outside New York, which of course cannot be taken as typical of America—at least, I hope not.

But New York itself already has its Negro Question, which is likely to grow before long into a serious problem. The district of Harlem has become almost a negro city with a quarter of a

million inhabitants, many of the negroes there being wealthy and highly educated people who are not likely to submit to the sort of treatment which is dealt out to the black people of the Southern States. Colour feeling is, however, not confined to the Southern States, but is very strong in New York—much stronger than I at first imagined. We dined one night at a well-known social settlement 'down town', run somewhat on the lines of Toynbee Hall. Living at the settlement were a good many resident young men and women, engaged in various forms of social work, nearly all of whom were present. There were two other visitors besides ourselves—a negro doctor of law and his wife—and he gave a most interesting address after dinner on modern negro literature, reading passages from several very beautiful poems. In the course of the evening I told the lady who presided over the settlement how glad I was to see that apparently no strong colour feeling existed amongst the social workers. To my surprise she said: 'I have been here a long time, and these young people have a great regard for me, and respect my wishes. But I can assure you that had they not known that I wished them to sit down to dinner with Dr. and Mrs. — not one of them would have been here!'

The Labour Movement in America, as is well known, is in quite an embryo stage, but we found some keen Socialists in New York who were doing their best in a most courageous spirit against tremendous odds. Mr. Hilquit, an old friend of Arthur Henderson, who had a few years earlier fought a very good fight for the mayoralty of New York, gave a dinner-party for us, where we met most of the leading Socialist men and women. We had a delightful evening, and some very good talk, but it was depressing to hear of the apathy and general lack of interest in Labour questions against which they were all struggling. While I was in New York the American Federation of Labour were considering which candidate for the Presidency they should support. They discussed the question all day, but as far as I could discover from the Press reports the name of Norman Thomas, the Socialist candidate, was not even mentioned. The decision was entirely between Hoover and Al. Smith.

We learned a good deal of American politics from other points of view through the kindness of the Miss Halles, two ladies to whom Mansbridge had given us an introduction. They took us as their guests on several occasions to lunches given by the Foreign Policy Association—a body engaged in spreading knowledge of foreign affairs, and publishing a very valuable bulletin. The association arranges fortnightly lunches all through the winter, which are usually attended by some fifteen hundred people. The lunches are most wonderfully organized, and are followed by about an hour's talk and discussion on some chosen subject. There are two speakers, who take opposing points of view, and then questions and discussion are invited. We heard a most interesting debate, for instance, on the League of Nations, and were surprised to find that a speech by Dr. Murray Butler, the President of Columbia University, in which he strongly urged that America should join the League, was applauded to the echo, while his opponent only obtained a very half-hearted hearing. On another occasion an account of the social and political conditions in Russia, so favourable that it would certainly have met with considerable hostility from an English middle-class audience, was received with enthusiasm, while the ordinary anti-Bolshevist reply fell quite flat. I remarked to some friends after one of these lunches that there seemed to be in the association a strong body of public opinion on what seemed to me the right lines, and I asked why it could not make itself felt in political quarters. I was told that the views I had heard were fairly widespread, but that those who held them were practically powerless, as the political machine was entirely in the hands of the big financial interests.

I of course came into touch with most of the people and organizations engaged in adult educational work in New York. I visited the Rand School of Social Science—a non-residential working-class college, in the foundation of which Charles Beard had had a hand after his return to the States from his work in connexion with Ruskin College. We also spent two days at Brookwood, a residential Labour College somewhat on the lines of Ruskin, which had been established in the country some thirty miles from New York in 1921. Most of the students

seemed to me to be somewhat imbued with Communist notions, and keener on obtaining material for propaganda than on serious education. The Principal, A. J. Musty, was doing his best, however, to keep the work on real educational lines. I took part in a conference on adult education which was being held while I was there, and spoke rather strongly on the real difference between education and propaganda, but my remarks were not particularly well received. Most of the people I met who were engaged in the adult educational movement were very keen, and doing good work, but I doubt if there is the same enthusiasm and demand for education amongst the working people of America as exist in England. The skilled workers are too prosperous to bother much about it, while the variety of races from which the unskilled workers are drawn creates an obvious difficulty.

We spent six months in New York, and so came to know the city pretty well. We of course heard much talk of Prohibition, and also saw a good deal of its absence ! It is almost invariably the first topic you hear mentioned at any New York party, and 'Have you got a good bootlegger ?' is a very usual conversational lead. The open and shameless violation of the law was to us astonishing. At a large dinner-party we heard a man who was the head of police of his district unblushingly tell the following story. He said that a few nights earlier he had been lowering some cases of whisky into his cellar when one of his own sergeants went by. Next morning he received a call from the sergeant, and having decided to make a clean breast of it, he said : 'I may as well be quite frank, sergeant ; I know you saw me last night, and it was whisky.' 'Oh, it's not that at all, sir,' said the sergeant. 'I only came to say that next time you do that sort of thing, would you mind doing it through me ?' I attended a really 'dry' public dinner at which a distinguished judge spoke. In the course of his remarks he said that his friends had laughed at him when he had told them where he was going that night. 'Rather a dry place for you,' was their comment. He must confess, he said, that it was somewhat of an 'oasis' ! He was afraid he was one of those who was not very strict about keeping the law. Of course I had no means of judging as to the effects of Prohibition outside

New York and its immediate neighbourhood, but as regards New York the law seems to me to be doing more harm than good.

We made many friends during our six months in New York. As I have said, one reason which tempted me to go to America was that I had hoped to see something of my cousin Will Johnson and his family, and on this side of the picture our visit was an unqualified success. Will met us at the quay on our arrival, and we were at once made completely at home in the house of Eloise, his stepdaughter, and her husband Frank Farley, with whom Will lived, his wife having died some years previously. Our apartment was in East 54th Street, quite close to the Farleys' house in East 49th Street, and there were frequent comings and goings between the two houses. Will and I met constantly, reviving many memories and finding ourselves at once on our old terms of intimate friendship. He was the same delightful companion, a good talker, with a wide knowledge of literature, and although he was not an economist or a politician, he seemed to like listening to me discoursing on economics, and arguing with me about political questions, English and American.

Eloise Farley, whom we had last seen as a young girl, had now a family of five children, and they at once adopted Vera as a cousin and introduced her to their friends. In fact, the house in East 49th Street was a second home to all us through the winter, and had it not been for Will and his family I should probably have given up my treatment and gone back to England much earlier than I did.

We also met a number of pleasant people through an American friend of ours who lived in Oxford, and who happened to be in New York while we were there. My wife went to many of the ladies' luncheon parties which are such a feature of New York society, and was made a temporary member of the famous Colony Club. The daughter of our old friends the Raymond Unwins had married Curtis Hitchcock, a member of the American branch of the firm of Macmillans, the publishers, and we saw a good deal of this young couple, and met many interesting people at their apartment. Vera found congenial work through the Junior League, an organization founded to

interest girls in useful social work and to place them where voluntary help was needed. The League supports a day nursery, and Vera joined several other young girls who were working there as assistants to the matron.

My wife was of course especially interested in the work of the Children's Courts, and through the kindness of Lady Armstrong, wife of the British Consul-General in New York, she was able to get into touch with the work of the courts and to meet many of the Probation Officers. She also visited several institutions, including a prison in New Jersey where a new system of 'classification' was being tried, and a State reformatory for women in New York State, where she was much interested in the workings of the 'indeterminate' sentence.

We rarely went far from the city all through this time, but we did spend three or four days at Atlantic City after my wife had had a bad attack of 'grippe' and tonsillitis. We much enjoyed the wonderful air and the quiet of the Broad Walk after the noise of New York. My wife not being equal to much walking, we spent a good deal of time going up and down portions of the eight miles long wooden walk in the funny little basket chairs known as 'Avro autos', drawn by negroes, which are the favourite means of locomotion at Atlantic City. Not so bad as the South African rickshaws, as the chairs were light and the negroes do not hurry themselves, but still rather degrading, we thought, as most of the people who were dragged about in this way were perfectly healthy and would have been far better using their legs. We also in the course of the spring paid two delightful visits to my cousin Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, the widow of the President, at her beautiful house at Oyster Bay on Long Island. She told us many interesting things about the former President and the years they spent at the White House. Her home, Sagamor Hill, was full of trophies of his hunting expeditions, and we were shown the beautiful and peaceful little bird sanctuary in the village which had been dedicated to his memory by some of his relations. We met several other members of the Roosevelt family in New York, who were exceedingly kind to us and who entertained us most hospitably.

During these six months we made only one real expedition, and this was at Easter time, when I had begun to be very much disheartened about my treatment, and when the noise and racket of New York had become intolerable. My wife and I went to Bermuda, where we spent a most delightful fortnight. After New York, the joy of being on an island where all motor traffic is prohibited can hardly be imagined. The peace, only disturbed by the sound of ponies' hoofs and an occasional bicycle bell, seemed at first almost alarming. It was beautiful summer weather, but not too hot, and apart from one or two lovely drives about the island amid fields of Madonna lilies, we spent most of our time sitting by the sea and reading, I trying to forget my eyes. However, our little respite seemed to make New York almost more unbearable when we got back, and early in May we moved out to Garrison-on-Hudson, about fifty miles from New York, having been able to rent a delightful little house there for the summer.

Garrison is a little village on the banks of the Hudson just opposite West Point, surrounded by beautiful country, and we looked forward to a quiet time there away from the noise of New York. But on our first view we had not realized its drawbacks, and soon found that as to quietness we were sadly mistaken, for just below the house ran the main line from New York to the west, and elaborate reconstruction works were in progress, involving constant blasting and the grinding away of the rocky cliff with the most excruciatingly noisy machinery. In addition to this, every train that passed—and there seemed to be a train about every three minutes—had to whistle violently in order to avoid running over the men working on the line. The first morning I woke up after an almost sleepless night and heard a train go screaming by. 'Blast,' I said, and a terrific report rent the air. They had blasted! All this noise was most trying, especially in the very hot weather. We had an unusually hot summer; the valley was shut in by hills, and the heat was almost as oppressive as in the centre of New York. The village was made less attractive than it must have been in normal times by the presence in its midst of the large gang of navvies working on the line. This was not their fault, poor fellows; they lived in the most horrible conditions,

some of them crowded into squalid lodgings, but most of them herded together in disused railway-cars. I was told that they were working on eleven-hour shifts night and day for seven days a week for four dollars a day. If they did not like it, it was apparently quite easy to get men to take their place, and the Railway Union seemed to take no interest in them whatever. The men were mostly from Central Europe, but there were a certain number of Poles and Italians amongst them. No arrangements for their comfort or amusement were made in the village. There was no social club, although they were going to be there for some years. None of the surrounding inhabitants took the slightest interest in them, but simply regarded them as a nuisance. There were two 'speak-easies' in the village—in other words, drinking shops—at which many of the men got very drunk on bad liquor, and the local doctor told me that he was often up half the night after pay day dressing knife wounds received during these drunken bouts. Highly-skilled workmen may be better off in America than in England, but in the States most of the unskilled work is done by foreigners—comparative new-comers to the country—for low wages, and they are for the most part unorganized.

During most of the time we were at Garrison I was toiling backwards and forwards in the broiling heat to New York to see my doctor, gradually realizing all the time that the treatment was hopeless, and getting back too tired to do any serious reading. I seemed to be losing touch with all my ordinary interests, and became exceedingly depressed. I began to think that, owing to my long absence from home, I should not be re-elected to my various committees. I had few men companions, and I longed for England.

When we were in New York I had seen a good deal of my former secretary Miss Archer, who had now become Mrs. Leonard Hodgson. Hodgson had been a Fellow of Magdalen, and was now a professor at the big Theological Seminary in Chelsea Square. Ethel Hodgson had been very kind in reading aloud to me in the winter, and we had been together to several first-rate concerts, and Hodgson was always ready for an afternoon walk. As I have said, my cousin Will Johnson had

been my constant companion in New York, but soon after we went to Garrison he and the Farleys went off for the summer to Connecticut, and the Hodgsons for a holiday to England. Most of the men I came to know round Garrison were occupied in New York all day and with bridge in the evenings. It was hardly surprising, therefore, that I became much dissatisfied with my life, and felt that I was merely wasting time by staying longer in America.

Early in July, therefore, we decided to come home. We had taken our house at Garrison until the end of October, but this alone would not have deterred me from starting at once, so anxious was I to get home. What really kept us in America was the fact that both our house in Oxford and our cottage at Filey were let, so that for the time being we had no home to go to, and our finances were so reduced that we could not afford to travel. We were therefore obliged, apart from one or two short visits, to remain at Garrison until the end of August.

One of these visits was to Will and the Farleys, who had taken a house at Stonington in Connecticut. Stonington is a delightful old fishing-town, famous for having defeated and driven off 'Kiss Me' Hardy of Nelson fame and his squadron in the war of 1812—a feat of which the inhabitants were still inordinately proud. We happened to be there on the anniversary of this exploit, which was celebrated with a considerable amount of noise and excitement. While I was there I spent the whole of one Sunday morning, at Will's suggestion, giving him an account of my life, and he not only had the patience to listen to it, but said he was sure it would interest other people, very strongly urging me to make a book of it. I did not think very seriously of this idea at the time, and in fact it almost dropped out of my mind until after I got home.

After another short visit to a cousin who had a beautiful house on the New Jersey coast, and a day or two in New York saying good-bye to friends, we set off for home, reaching Oxford once more early in September 1928.

The experiment had failed, and I was naturally very much disappointed. But the pleasure of getting home again, seeing old and sympathetic friends, and renewing old interests, did

much to lessen the disappointment and to keep my mind off my eyes. After all, it had always been a gamble, and I had lost. I sometimes cursed myself for a fool for ever having set out on such a venture. But taking into consideration the improvement I had gained at the outset and the advice and encouragement I had received from those who had first-hand knowledge of the treatment, I am sure that, had I not made this one last bid for a cure, I should afterwards have always felt that I had thrown away a chance. I did for a time consider continuing the treatment under the London people who were practising it, and in fact went to see them once or twice. They strongly urged me to go on, but on thinking it over I came to the conclusion that I could not be bothered any more with my eyes. The chances of any real result from the treatment seemed so remote, and I had much more interesting things to think about and do. There are, after all, many worse things in the world than blindness, and I had got on pretty well as I was. So I said: 'Damn my eyes', and decided to let them go hang.

I was at first a little at a loss to know what to do next, feeling somewhat out of touch with the work I had left so long. But I found that, in spite of my having been away nearly a year, I was still a member of all my old committees. Notwithstanding the long strain I had gone through, I was remarkably well, and soon threw myself again into my W.E.A. and delegacy work. We had a day or two at the Labour Party Conference in Birmingham, getting in touch once more with old friends and picking up political threads. Then, after a delightful ten days at Filey, we settled down once more to our Oxford life.

While I was at Filey I thought a good deal over what Will Johnson had said about the possibility of writing some memoirs, and began to think there might perhaps be something in it. Being much in need of some really absorbing occupation, I decided to make the attempt. In the middle of October, therefore, I set to work, and finished the first draft of Chapters I to XV before Christmas. I then put the book aside for a time, finding I was getting a little stale, and being doubtful about the construction of the remaining chapters. Other

work, too, had cropped up which occupied much more of my time than I had anticipated. I had been Chairman of the Southern District of the W.E.A. since 1924. It was then, as I have already explained, a much smaller district than the old South-Eastern District of which I had been secretary during the War. But, as the branches and classes increased, it had been found that the area was still too large to be covered by one district secretary living in Reading. Early in 1929 it was decided to take in East Dorset and West Sussex, and with this addition it would have become quite unworkable. It was therefore determined to divide the district into two—the one to include Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, East Dorset, and West Sussex; the other the three counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire. This plan involved the raising of a considerable amount of money to cover the salary of a District Secretary for Berks, Bucks and Oxon, and other expenses for the carrying on of the new district. I, as chairman, and my wife as treasurer, had to take a leading part in the raising of this money, and we were both busy for some time drafting and sending out appeals, interviewing possible subscribers, and writing numerous letters to persuade doubters that the W.E.A. was a really educational and even useful institution! By the end of the summer term we had secured sufficient funds to justify us in making a start—somewhat precarious from the financial point of view—and in October the Berks, Bucks, and Oxon District was inaugurated. I was elected chairman and my wife honorary treasurer.

This work was interrupted for a time by a new electioneering campaign in which we both took a part. Headington was in the spring of this year taken into the city of Oxford, and in March an election for an entirely new Council for the whole of the enlarged city was held. My wife had in former years twice stood as a Labour candidate for the Oxford City Council, but without success, and she was asked to become one of the Labour candidates for Headington. I was also asked to stand, and we spent a busy week or two canvassing and speaking at meetings in different parts of the district. However, we shared the fate of all the Labour candidates put up throughout the city. My wife got a few more votes than I, but I was not at

the bottom of the poll! A little later at a by-election one Labour candidate was returned.

Oxford is singularly backward politically. We gathered as the result of our canvassing that there was great dissatisfaction with regard to municipal affairs generally, and nearly everybody complained of something or other. But the Oxford working people do not seem to be alive to the possibilities of an improvement in their condition through municipal action, or to realize that the remedy for inadequate housing, lack of open spaces, and other matters, lies largely in their own hands, and they will not lift a finger to help themselves.

Then came the general election of 1929. We had a very tempting invitation to speak in several north country towns and to settle down in one good Labour north country constituency for the week before polling day. But my wife was just recovering from a bad attack of influenza and bronchitis, and was unfortunately not well enough for such a strenuous undertaking. I therefore confined myself to doing what work I could for our friend John Etty, the Labour candidate for Oxford City, and spoke for him in the Town Hall. My wife, however, took an active part in the campaign, working as Etty's sub-agent, and also speaking in the Banbury and the Henley Divisions of Oxfordshire. As usual in our electioneering efforts, we were fighting on the losing side so far as Oxford and the neighbouring constituencies were concerned, but we were naturally much elated at the success of the Labour Party in the country generally. We sat up with a party of friends on polling day until four o'clock in the morning, listening to the results coming through on the wireless, and only went to bed when we heard to our great delight that our friend Will Hall had won by a good majority the difficult seat of Portsmouth Central.

At the election we had an amusing experience with old 'Huntie', now eighty years of age. In former years she had of course been against woman suffrage, though on one occasion we found that she had in one day signed petitions both for and against the movement—'I could hardly refuse a lady who asked me to put my name, could I?' However, finding that our maids were going to exercise their vote in this election,

she of course was not going to be out of it. She has always professed to deplore our views, maintaining that she is a Conservative, so when she consulted me as to the method of voting, I naturally told her the name of the Conservative candidate and indicated to her the place on the card where her mark should be put. To this she replied furiously: 'You don't think I'm going to vote Conservative, do you?' I pointed out that it was usual to vote for the candidate to whose party you belonged, but she would have none of it. 'I hope,' she said with dignity, 'that I know my place better than to vote different to my master'—a Victorian sentiment which I do not fancy is found in many households to-day! I had therefore to give her all details as to the Labour candidate, and in her best clothes—as always, in the height of fashion—she set off with us in the car. On the way my wife impressed on her the necessity of not talking in the polling station, an injunction which she assured us was quite unnecessary. We had, however, hardly stepped inside before she clutched my wife's hand, saying in a loud voice: 'Who did you say I was to vote for, darling?' This somewhat compromising remark fortunately passed unheard, and she duly recorded her vote, returned home, took up her *Daily Mail*, and assured us that she was again a Conservative!

We were in London during the week of the opening of Parliament, and paid several visits to the House of Commons. There were now fourteen old Ruskin College students in Parliament, and two of them in the Government, and I had some most enjoyable afternoons talking to them on the Terrace. I became during that week such an *habitué* of the Terrace that one very hot afternoon I actually fell asleep there while waiting for an old pupil who, in his capacity as an Under-Secretary, was engaged in an important interview!

During this summer we paid visits to some old friends of my Clifton days of whom I had not seen much in recent years—to the Mallets at their house on Exmoor, to Molly Pope (my wife's cousin and my little girl friend of former days, who still lived at Clifton), and to the Wards. Ward had left Cornwall some years before and come back to Clifton as treasurer to the Bristol Merchant Venturers' Society. From Clifton we

went on to the Gibbises at Clifton Hampden, to add one more to the many happy week-ends we have spent at the Manor House. Then to the Brewsters on Painswick Hill, finally settling down in our little haven at Filey. While we were there our old friend Mabel Hitchings, who has always been one of our very frequent visitors and is almost one of the family, came to stay with us. I was reading a good deal of Braille at the time, and she was so much interested that I persuaded her to take a course of training and to become a Braille writer. The blind are now fairly well supplied with books, but there is still a need for volunteer transcribers. The work requires patience and accuracy, but is not very arduous, and is well adapted to people with leisure time at their disposal.

Our time at Filey this summer was interrupted by two expeditions to the south—one on W.E.A. business, and the other to the first international conference on adult education, held by the World Association for Adult Education at Cambridge. We were very much struck by the quietness of Cambridge as compared with Oxford, and a night at the 'Bull' as regards peacefulness compared very favourably with a night we had recently spent at the 'Mitre'. But then Cambridge has no Sir William Morris! The conference was a great event. There were some four hundred and fifty people, coming from nearly all over the world, and we enjoyed the opportunity of meeting friends we had made overseas, and many others.

While at Filey I turned my attention to the memoirs again. My wife had kept very full diaries of our time in Australia, South Africa, and America, and with her aid I was able to put together the last four chapters. We spent most of the mornings at work on our little veranda, and by the time we got back to Oxford the book was practically finished.

Such is the record of my life—not perhaps very eventful, but happy, and I think fairly full. I have had to live and work under a serious disability, but this has been largely compensated for by a complete absence of other ills. I have suffered little bodily pain; I have not known poverty; I have not experienced unkind or cruel treatment. True, I have had

to give up the work I most loved, but I have recovered my health, and at sixty-one am able once more to enjoy life to the full—eager, indeed, to go forward into any new adventure which life may still hold for me.

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